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Practical Discourses

O F

S I N G I N G

I N T H E

Worship of GOD;

Preach'd at the *Friday* Lecture in
E A S T C H E A P.

By Several MINISTERS.

*Iſa. LII. 8. Thy Watchmen ſhall liſt up the
Voice, with the Voice together ſhall they ſing.*

L O N D O N;

Printed by J. Darby for N. Cliff at the *Golden
Candleſtick*, the lower End of *Cheapside*,
near the *Old Jury*; and J. Philips at the
Bull, next Door to the *Fleece-Tavern* in
Cornhil. M. DCC. VIII.



THE PREFACE.

THE Duty of Singing
in the Worship of
God had been very
much neglected and unskilfully
perform'd among our selves,
in comparison of the greater
Knowledge and better Care of
the foreign Churches; till
some late Attempts were set on
foot to teach the Art, and in-
courage the Practice.

Among other Designs of this Nature, the Week-day Lecture, at which the following Sermons were preach'd, and that has been continu'd several Years for the Service of Religion, and particularly the Encouragement of Singing, has not been the least considerable, nor the least serviceable and successful.

And as we thought fit at some time or other to consider a Subject, as much neglected as the Practice, and as rarely handled as it was generally ill perform'd; so we thought it could be no where more proper than at such a Place. And tho they were first undertaken, and now publish'd at the De-

THE PREFACE.

fire of the Gentlemen that encourage and support it, and for their particular Use; yet we think our selves concern'd to declare, That as we profess to follow the Guidance of no other Spirit but that of God, nor to be of any Party but that of all serious Christians; so they are sincerely directed to the common Benefit, and have no lower or more confin'd an Aim, than the Satisfaction and Assistance of all the Serious and Sincere.

Many of our Reverend Fathers employ'd excellent Pains in the several Volumes of the Morning-Lectures that were devoted to the Service of Practical Religion, instead of meddling with the angry Dis-

putes, and the burtful Quarrels of the Times ; and have been very useful to the World : and we thought it no way improper or unsutable to the Character and Circumstance of younger Ministers, to be willing to serve so excellent an Interest ; and hope we may move in this lower Sphere without any just Censure.

It will be necessary to observe, That tho the present Discourses may not be so uniform and of a Piece, or wrought off with so even a Thred, as if compos'd by a single Hand ; like the different Colourings of several Hands in a Picture : yet they have upon that Account their Advantage
and

and Convenience too. For tho the same things happen sometimes to be said by several, yet they are always directed to a different Purpose, and express'd in a different Manner. And it may be some Gratification to the innocent Curiosity, as well as some Help to the real Benefit of the serious Reader, to see the same things held in a different Light, and cloth'd in a different Dress ; and may give the greater Advantage to the Evidence and Beauty of Divine Truth. So that what is wanting in the Symmetry of Parts, or Equality of Stile, is made up in the Pleasure of Variety ; like the grateful Confusion of different Flowers

*Flowers in a pleasant Field,
or the pleasing Harmony arising
from the Composition of
several Sounds.*

*We shall only add, That if
we had known any thing so
distinctly writ upon the Sub-
ject, form'd out of the Scrip-
ture, and fitted for common
Use, we should have thought
the present Undertaking the
less necessary. And we are
willing to hope it may not be
wholly fruitless, and without
Success, as we earnestly desire
it may be attended with the
Divine Blessing.*

London, Feb. 13.

1707.

THE

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E R R A T A.

P A G. 23. lin. penult. for $\delta\eta$ read $\Delta\iota$.
 24. lin. 6. for $\chi\theta\sigma\iota\alpha$ read $\chi\theta\sigma\iota\alpha$.
 102. r. $\Delta\eta$.

BOOKS Printed for and Sold
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Bull*, next the *Fleece-Tavern*, o-
ver against the *Royal Exchange*
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thers, 'that the Soul is a Principle natu-
rally mortal, but immortaliz'd actually
by the Pleasure of God to Punishment,
or to Reward by its Union with the
Divine Baptismal Spirit; wherein is
prov'd, that none have the Power of
giving this Divine immortalizing Spirit
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City. The 3d Edition, with the addi-
tion of 37 new Characters.

Some

term. I. *tion* to the following Discourses, I have chosen these Words as the **Foundation** of what I have to offer upon that Matter, and shall in a few words shew their Relation to the Context.

In the foregoing Chapters the **Apostle** asserts the great Truths of the Gospel, and in this begins a practical Exhortation, grounded upon what he had been there establishing : From the Consideration of what he had there said, pressing Heavenly-mindedness and Mortification, from *Verse* 1. to 12. from whence to the 16th, he urges to the particular Dutys of Charity, Peace and Thankfulness ; and as a Means in order hereto directs the diligent Study of the Scriptures, which duly entertain'd

Tim. III.
6.

are able to make us wise unto Salvation ; and particularly enjoins the *Singing of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*, as tending to promote the Interest of Holiness in our Hearts and Lives.

In the Words we have the Act,
the Object, the Manner, the End
of the mention'd Duty from the
joint

the Duty of SINGING.

3

joint Consideration whereof we *Serm. I.*
may form a Definition of it, as 
exact as we are concern'd to have.

I. The *Act* is *Singing*; the general Notion of which is *speaking musically*: and I should but abuse your Patience in detaining you, while I insisted more largely upon a matter which is so obvious to the meanest Understanding.

II. The *Object* is *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. How these are distinguish'd I cannot tell, and shall not trouble you with the Opinions of others. In this they all agree, That they are Words so compos'd, as to be fit for Singing; which is the proper Notion of what we call *Verse* or *Metre*.

But the *Object* of Singing in general be ~~it~~ *at Composures, or Words set to Tunes*; I need not tell you that the *Object* of Singing, as it is an Act of Relig. or Worship, is *Divine* and *Spiritual Songs, i.e.* Composures which contain a Divine or Spiritual Sense, whose *subject Matter* is God, his Nature,

Serm. I. Perfections, and wonderful Works, according to the Discovery which he has made of himself in his Word, which we call the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

And I conceive that whatever Songs are Scriptural are the proper Object of Singing, as it is under present Consideration; especially those which treat of Christ, and the Benefits of his Redemption. For I can by no means be of their mind, who in the public Congregations would confine us to that Collection of the *Jewish Psalmody*, which is call'd the *Psalms of David*, for Reasons which I must not give, because I am not allow'd to invade another's Province. I come next,

III. To the *Manner* of Singing; and tho what I have here to propose will fall under the Consideration of him whose business it is to give Directions, yet I am necessarily oblig'd to mention some things under this Head, because in all Moral and Religious Actions
the

the Duty of SINGING.

the *Manner* of Performance is an *Serm. I.*
essential Part, and the Neglect of
it will, in the sight of God, de-
nominate that Trifling and Hypo-
crisy, which Men would have pass
for Divine Service or Worship.
Therefore,

§. 1. It must be *with Grace in the*
Heart. There must be a Concur-
rence of Heart and Voice. God
does indeed require the *Calves of Hos. XIV.*
the Lips, but mere Praises will not
be an acceptable Sacrifice. There-
fore *David* calls upon his *Soul* to
bless the Lord, and *all that was* *Ps. CIII. 1.*
within him to bless God's holy Name.
Agreeably to which the Apostle
directs, that we should *make melody* *Eph. V. 19.*
in our Hearts to the Lord. And
indeed it is a rul'd Case, that *bo-* *1 Tim. IV.*
dily Exercise profiteth little. Now
Singing with Grace in the Heart
may imply as follows:

(1.) That he that sings be a
gracious Person, or a good Man.
We know that God heareth not Sin-
ners, is a Maxim applicable to the
present Case. *The Prayer of the*
Wicked is an Abomination, and his
Praises can't be acceptable. Yea,

Serm. I. it must needs be a provoking thing
 to a holy and jealous God, for
 those to sing his Praises that de-
 spise his Government; and hate his
 Laws. Such People do but *lye unto*
him with their Mouths, and flatter
him with their Lips. And even a
 Man of common Discretion would
 less resent the Curses of an Ene-
 my, than open and notorious Flat-
 tery. It is mocking and insulting
 the great God, for Men at once
 to praise his Name, and live in an
 habitual Defiance of him. It is a

Ps. XXII. *Holy God that inhabits the Praises*
 3. *of Israel; and therefore we should*
 resolve as David did, *I will wash*
 Ps. XXVI. *my hands in Innocence, and so will I*
 6, 7. *compass thine Altar, O Lord: That*
I may publish with the Voice of
Thanksgiving, and tell of all thy
wondrous Works.

(2.) It must be in the lively
 Exercise of particular Graces; as,

[1.] *Knowledge.* A Man must
 understand and actually consider
 what he says, when he sings the

Ps. XLVII. *Sing ye Praises*
 7. *with Understanding.* Otherwise
 what he does is no more an Act

the Duty of SINGING. 7

of Worship or Devotion, than *Serm.* *k*
the Noise of a musical Instrument. 
He is properly but *as sounding* *1 Cor. XIII*
Brass, and a tinkling Cymbal.

[2.] *Faith.* For without Faith it
is impossible to please God. And he *Heb. XI. 6.*
that comes to him must believe that
he is, and that he is a Rewarder of all
them that diligently seek him.

[3.] *Love.* This is the first and
great Commandment, Thou shalt love *Mat. XXII.*
the Lord thy God with all thy Heart,
&c. Accordingly it is to be re-
garded as the Spring of all accep-
table Obedience: and surely Praise
must be a cold and nauseous thing,
if it don't flow from a Heart fill'd
with Gratitude and sincere Affec-
tion. If there ben't inward De-
fire, Delight, and Admiration,
Songs of Praise are empty and in-
significant Things; especially con-
sidering that God is not to be
impos'd upon: but *all things are* *Heb. IV.*
naked and open in his sight with whom.
we have to do.

[4.] *Humility.* Tho Custom
has not made it usual to kneel in
Singing as in Praying, yet an e-
qual Prostration of Soul becomes

rm. I. us in both, considering what an infinite Distance there is between us and the Object of our Songs, and how *he is exalted far above all Blessing and Praise, the Hallelujahs of the Angels as well as the Hosannas of the Saints*: Especially remembering that we are Sinners, and so deserve to be in that place where the Circumstances of the miserable Inhabitants extort *weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth*, instead of Praise and joyful Acclamations.

§. 2. It must be in the *Name* of the Lord Jesus Christ; *ver. 17. Giving thanks unto the Father by him.* Parallel to this is that of the Apostle, *Unto him be Glory in the Church by Christ Jesus.* The Import of this Expression is, that our Praises must be offer'd up to God thro the Mediation of Christ, whose Intercession procures Acceptance for our Praises as well as Prayers. The same Hand must present, and the same Incense perfume both.

IV. The

IV. The *End* of Singing is two-fold : The Glory of God, and mutual Edification.

§. 1. The *Glory* of God. This is the ultimate End of a Christian in all his Actions, and especially Religious ; *Whoſo offereth Praise*, *Pſ. L. ult. glorifies me.* I need not tell you, that we can't make God more glorious than he is neceſſarily, eſſentially, and eternally ; but by praiſing God, we acknowledg and proclaim his Glory.

§. 2. Mutual *Edification* ; and particularly,

(1.) *Instruction and Admonition*: *Teaching and admoniſhing one another, &c.* Now this End is admirably answer'd by *Pſalms, Hymns, and Songs*, in which important Truths are many times moſt agreeably propos'd, more eaſily impreſs'd, and better remember'd than otherwiſe. Upon which account it has been uſual in all Ages, even thoſe moſt remote from the preſent time, and in all places where there has been any Religion profeſs'd, or publick

Serm. I. Worship paid to a Superior Being, to deliver what they counted sacred Myfterys in Verſe, and to ſet that Verſe to Tunes. But this needs not be inſiſted on.

(2.) *Comfort.* According to that, *Is any man afflicted? let him pray: Is any merry? let him ſing Pſalms.*

But as all theſe things will fall in under other Heads, I am allow'd only to mention 'em; and that ſeems ſufficient to answer my Deſign, which was to ſhow the Nature of the *Ordinance*.

From what has been ſaid, I might draw ſeveral uſeful Inferences; but conſidering that my Diſcourſe is but introductory to the reſt, I ſhall only mention two or three things, to which the General Heads fairly lead me: As,

1. That our Singing ſhould be as *muſical* as may be: For tho' where God has deny'd a Voice or an Ear, he will not require what he has not given, yet ſurely we ſhould ſerve him with the beſt we have, and improve every Talent to the beſt advantage, ſeeing we muſt

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must account for it: and we may *Serm. 1*
imagine what the Consequences of 
our Neglect will be, if we consider,
that awful Text, *Cursed be the De-* *Mal. I. 14.*
ceiver which hath in his Flack a Male,
and voweth and sacrificeth unto the
Lord a corrupt thing. Indeed our
best shall be accepted, be it ever
so mean; but nothing less shall
be regarded, be it ever so good.
And the Reason is obvious; be-
cause to put off God with any
thing short of the best, must needs
be a high Affront to him, who is
infinitely exalted *above all Blessing*
and Praise, and deserves infinitely
better from us than our best can
be. It's true, the Musick of our
Voice is a matter of less impor-
tance than the Melody of our
Heart, but not therefore to be
neglected; because a very minute
Circumstance may be expressive of
a great deal of Duty or Disobe-
dience, as sufficiently appears in
the Case of our first Parents. In
a word, I may apply to the pre-
sent Case that of our Lord in ano-
ther; *These ought ye to have done, Luke XI.*
and not left the other undone: and 42.
lay

Serm. I. lay the stress of what I have said

1 Cor. VI.
20.

upon that of the Apostle, *Glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirits, which are his.*

2. If the Object of Singing is Scriptural Songs, then undoubtedly we must not mingle our own *Inventions*, *Fancys*, and private *Opinions*, with the great and obvious *Truths* of the Gospel, in those *Composures* which we sing in the *Worship* of God. And I think this sufficiently intimated in the Text; *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs.* If men don't in every Ordinance keep to this Rule, *to the Law and to the Testimony*, their *Sacrifices* cannot be acceptable, but must fall under

Mat. XV. 9. that Censure, *In vain do they worship me.* And this is one Abomination in the Church of *Rome*, that they sing not only what is unscriptural, but antiscritptural too, yea infinitely absurd and ridiculous; as I might shew by Instances enough to enlarge this Discourse into a Volume.

To per
Thoma
San,
per, &c.

the Duty of SINGING. 13

3. If the Manner of Perfor-Serm. I.
mance be *with Grace in our Hearts*,
then we must see to it that we be
sincerely *devoted* to that God whose
Praises we sing, and not sing the
Lord's Songs with unhallow'd Lips.
We must also endeavour to have
every Grace (as before mention'd)
in its proper and lively Exercise,
and tune our Hearts as well as
Voices. We must offer a reason-
able Service, *understand* and at-
tend to the Sense of what we sing,
lest we be no *wiser than the Fowls* Job
of the Heaven, who sing they know XXXV.1
not what. We must set our selves
as in the *Presence* of the All-seeing
God, that a Sense of his Inspec-
tion may awe us into a decent Re-
verence, and make us watch a-
gainst every thing unfutable to the
Solemnity of Worship, and im-
pertinent to the Business before
us: Believing and being firmly
persuaded, that as we must ac-
count for every Action in general,
whether good or bad, so in a very
particular manner for every Act
of Worship; and that of *every*
idle Word we must give an account

m. I. *in the Day of Judgment to him who*
 W *taketh no pleasure in Fools. Let us*
have an eye to the Recompence of Re-
ward, as those who believe that
the Care and Pains we take in the
lowest Instance of Duty, shall in no
wise lose its Reward. Let us think
with our selves, that while we
are conscientiously singing the Prais-
es of God in his Church below,
we are training up for that better
World, where everlasting Joy shall
be upon our Heads, and our Mouths
eternally fill'd with the high Prais-
es of our God; and not forget
to consider what a dreadful thing
it will be, to have our Crys and
Wailings in Hell receive a higher
Accent from our Hypocritical
Songs of Praise on Earth. Let us
also see to it; that we sing the
Praises of God in the Exercise of
Holy Love, that every Breath be
warm'd with that holy Flame, and
a devout Aspiration attend every
Word we utter. Thus David be-
gins that lofty Song of Praise,
Psal. XXVI. I will love thee, O Lord,
my Strength: and so should every
Psalm of Praise we sing, deserve
 the

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the Title of a *Song of Loves*. Thus Serm. I. will the Imployment be delightful to our selves, and grateful to God; *Chear the Heart both of God and Man.* Psal. XLV. Title.

Finally, Let us join *Humility* to the other Graces, remembring what a Majesty we approach, what unworthy Creatures we are, and how sorry things our Offerings be. Herein imitating those glorious Creatures, with whom we one day hope to join in eternal Hallelujahs; who *cover their Faces and Feet*, Isa. VI. 2, 3. when they cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God*, &c.

And this Humility will make us come in the *Name* of Jesus, under a sense of our own Unworthiness, and a Persuasion that the Holy God can accept of nothing from the hands of such abominable Wretches as we are, but thro the Merits and Intercession of him, *whom the Father heareth always.*

4. From what has been said of the End, we may infer our Obligation to aim at the *Glory* of God in this Duty; that we do it to *the Lord*. That we despise and abhor

Serm. I. abhor the Thoughts of driving
 ~~~~~ on any base or mean Designs under the cover of the choicest Devotion: That we don't *for a pretence* multiply our Songs of Praise, as the Pharisees lengthen'd out their Prayers, lest we *receive*, as they, *greater Damnation*.

And seeing mutual Edification is another End we are to aim at, I shall here take leave to advise that our Singing be with a distinct and *audible* Voice, without which it should seem that End can't be answer'd. How can Men be affected with an indistinct Murmur, or how shall they know we do really join in praising God, while we speak only to our selves? Indeed the Heart may be right, and God principally regards *its* Melody: but unless we sing (as far as the Nature of the thing will bear) so as to be understood by others, or to have them satisfy'd that we go along with them; I may justly apply what the Apostle speaks against praying in an unknown Tongue, We speak into the

## the Duty of SINGING. 17

*the Air : Our Spirit indeed sings, Sermon I. but our Understanding is unfruitful.* We should therefore *sing with the Spirit, and sing with Understanding ; i. e.* so as to be understood by others. And therefore as we should be cautious not to confound others by an unseemly Noisiness, so we should extend our Voice to the most convenient degree we are able; and not under a Pretence of Modesty baulk the great End of the Institution. The Levites *prais'd* <sup>1 Chron. XX. 19.</sup> *the Lord, the God of Israel, with a loud Voice on high ;* and Paul and Silas sung so loud, that the *Priests heard 'em.* <sup>Acts XVI. 25.</sup>

5. To conclude : If God in this, as well as other Ordinances, looks so much to the Heart, and expects to be worship'd *in Spirit and in Truth*, what need have we to *watch* our own Spirits, and *pray* for his? We had need take all the Pains, and use all the Application possible; and finding all that insufficient, we must have recourse to a better Strength than our own, praying that our Hearts  
may

Serm. I. may be set in Tune by the *Finger of God* ; and joining with the Psalmist, say, *Open thou my Lips, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise.*

---

ARGU-

---

---

ARGUMENTS *for the*  
*Duty of SINGING,*

---

SERMON II.

---

PSAL. CV. 2.

*Sing unto him, sing Psalms unto  
him.*

THE Occasion of this Psalm  
may be gather'd from  
1 Chron. XVI. 7. there we  
find it was put into the hands of  
*Asaph and his Brethren by David* :  
They had brought the *Ark of God*  
into its Resting-place, and then  
gave out themselves to the view of  
a long and quiet Settlement. We  
may observe this, that it was first  
admitted as a Part of Worship  
with

rm.II.with the nearest regard to their  
 ~own Felicity, and afterwards em-  
 body'd in the Collection of *Psalms*,  
 that it might be of universal Ser-  
 vice. This, I think, is very clear  
 under the Protection of this one  
 Argument, *viz.* That the Song  
 which we read entire in the Book  
 of *Chronicles*, is broke and divi-  
 ded to make up several Parts of  
*Psalms*, that seem to be more un-  
 confin'd and popular. The be-  
 ginning of it we meet with in this  
 CVth Psalm, what follows is dis-  
 pos'd of into the XCVth; one  
 Verse lies often in our way, par-  
 ticularly in the CXVIIIth and  
 CXXXVIth, and well it may, for  
 it is the Summary of Praise; *Give  
 Thanks to God, for he is Good, for  
 his Mercy endures for ever.* The  
 concluding Petition is the same  
 with what you find in the CVth  
 Psalm; and the Doxology, the  
 close of Joy, we meet with both  
 here and in another Psalm that is  
 compos'd with a direct view of  
 that Mediator, who *took upon him  
 the Seed of Abraham.* The same  
*devotional Language* which they  
 us'd

us'd at bringing home the Ark, *Serm. II.* serves an higher purpose, and is the breathing of Faith and Joy to him who was *greater than the Temple*. This will appear if you unite *Psal. LXXII. 18, 19.* in the same view with *Psal. CVI. 48.* These things will vindicate our Application of an Old Testament Advice to these *last days*, in which God is *speaking to us by his Son*. 'Tis true, there's the distance of a great many Ages between the Time of such Exhortation and ours, *upon whom the ends of the Earth are come*; but it reaches us without any Decay or Wast of Argument, and I will dare to deliver it in those Terms to every one that's *Partaker of the Heavenly Calling*; *Arise, for the matter belongs unto thee.*

This is the Design that I have in the choice of this Text, and that you had in directing me to a part of Service among you; I'm to establish the Truth and Obligation of a great Ordinance, and show what a rightful Claim it has upon those who would *walk worthy of God unto all pleasing.* SINGING  
his

Serm. II. his Praise appears to be a Duty  
 from these four Springs of Argument; The Light of Nature, The Commands of the Word, The Examples of God's People, and The Work of the Holy Spirit within us.

I. It may be prov'd from that *natural* and common *knowledge* of things which God has bestow'd upon Mankind at large. Revelation produces it in a better Light, and strikes deeper into the Conscience; but yet the Duty it self is of a more diffusive kind, and takes the same Compass with human Reason. I will mention three things under this Head, which will fill up the Argument.

§. I. 'Tis promoted by those Works of Greatness and Mercy that lie open to an universal Remark. David calls in the Heavhen World to bear a Part in this great Comfort; Praise him all ye Nations, praise him all ye People. 'Tis a common Duty, and includes the whole rational Nature: Let the Nations be glad and sing for Joy.  
 ——— Let

## the Duty of SINGING: 23

—Let the People praise thee O God, Serm. II.  
 let all the People praise thee. Tho' Ps. LXVII.  
 the Myfterys of Redemption are 4, 5  
 unknown among 'em, so that they psal.  
 cannot think of God's loving kind- XLVIII. 9.  
 nefs in the midst of his Temple; yet  
 Creation and Providence give 'em  
 the Memorials of a Deity, and  
 those may touch their Joys in a  
 fainter way: for according to God's Ver. 10.  
 Name, so is his Praise to the Ends of  
 the Earth, and his right Hand is  
 full of Righteousness. What may be Rom. I. 19,  
 known of him is manifest in them, 20.  
 for he has shown it to 'em; and the  
 invisible things of him from the Cre-  
 ation of the World are clearly seen by  
 the things that do appear, even his  
 Eternal Power and Godhead. This  
 is so noble an Argument to the  
 Work of Praise, that their Si-  
 lence falls under a severe Corre-  
 ction; they are said to be without Ver. 24.  
 Excuse, because that when they knew  
 God, they glorify'd him not as God.

Nature taught the Heathens to  
 sing the Praises of their Gods:

Δεῦτε δὴ ἐννεπτε σφέτερον πατέρ' ἡμεῶν.  
 ὑμεῖς οὐαί,

"Erga—  
 ὑμεῖς—Deorum

Serm. II.

Theocrit.

Idyl. 2.

v. 10.

ὑμνεῦσαι Δία τ' αἰγίοχον καὶ πότ-  
νιαν Ἥρην.

————— Ἀλλὰ Σελανα  
φαῖνε καλόν. τὴν γὰρ πῦταίσουμαι  
ἄσυχον, δαίμον  
τᾷ χθονία δ' ἐκάτα. —————

De Musi-  
ca.

*Plutarch* says, That Singing and Musick among the antient *Greeks* were wholly imploy'd in the Worship of their Gods; and laments their Profanation and Abuse in later times when they brought 'em into the Theater.

Εἰ γὰρ νῦν

εἵχομεν

ἀλλὰ τι

ἔδει ημᾶς

ποιεῖν καὶ

κοινῇ καὶ ἱ-

δία, ἢ ὑμ-

νεῖν τὰ

θεῖον, &amp;c.

Arriani

Epict. l. i.

c. 16.

'Tis an admirable Expression of the *Stoick* Philosopher: " If we are wise, what is more properly our Business, in publick and private, than to sing Praises to the Deity? Should not the Labourer in the Field and at his Table sing an Hymn to God? If I were a Nightingal, I would do as the Nightingals do; if a Swan, as the Swans: but since I am a reasonable Creature, God must be prais'd by me; I will never forsake the Practice my self, and I exhort all others to it.

Th

## the Duty of SINGING. 25

The *Apostate* Emperor speaks Serm. II. of fine *Hymns* consecrated to the Gods, and advises them to be learn'd and remembred. Juliani Opera, p. 301.

Many of the Scripture-Songs are rais'd upon a view of what God has done in Nature, things expos'd to an universal Admiration. *David* considers the *Heavens* as the *Work* of his *Fingers*, the *Moon* and the *Stars* that he had ordain'd; and then says, *Lord, what is Man?* 'Tis true, these are only part of his ways, and we cannot see the *Glory* of God to any saving advantage, but in the face of *Jesus Christ*: however there are some *Beams* of *Perfection* shining out to them, who are *Aliens* from the *Covenant* of *Promise*. For the *Heavens* declare the *Glory* of God, and the *Firmament* shows his handy *Work*. Psal. VIII. 3, 4. Job XXVI. 14. 2 Cor. IV. 6. Psal. XIX. 1, 2, 3, 4.

*Day* unto *Day* utters *Speech*, and *Night* unto *Night* shows *Knowledge*. There is no *Speech* or *Language* where their *Voice* is not heard; for their *Line* is gone thro' all the *Earth*, and their *Words* unto the end of the *World*. These are not so limited as the *Statutes* that he gave to *Jacob*.

1. The first  
2. The second  
3. The third  
4. The fourth  
5. The fifth

6. The sixth  
7. The seventh

8. The eighth  
9. The ninth

10. The tenth  
11. The eleventh

12. The twelfth  
13. The thirteenth

14. The fourteenth  
15. The fifteenth

16. The sixteenth  
17. The seventeenth

18. The eighteenth  
19. The nineteenth

20. The twentieth  
21. The twenty-first

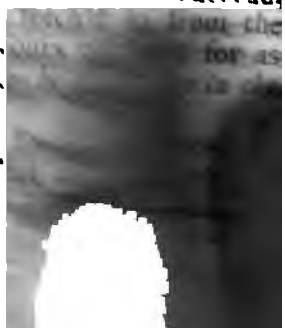
22. The twenty-second  
23. The twenty-third

24. The twenty-fourth  
25. The twenty-fifth

26. The twenty-sixth  
27. The twenty-seventh

28. The twenty-eighth  
29. The twenty-ninth

30. The thirtieth  
31. The thirty-first



or  
to

a *Messiah*. The Adoption that per-  
tain'd to 'em, the Glory, the Cove-  
nants, the giving of the Law, and the  
Promises, was because they were a  
People, of whom as concerning the  
Flesh Christ came. These had no  
further value in them than as they  
were establish'd by a temporary  
Command, and pointed to that ri-  
per Glory, those better things that  
God had reserv'd for us. But the ult.

Serm. II.  
Rom. IX.  
3, 4.

Works that are purely moral are  
oftentimes mention'd apart from  
them; and when these two are  
put into the Ballance, the Cha-  
racter always weighs on one side:  
The Lord has not so great Delight,  
in Burnt-Offering and Sacrifice, as

in obeying the Voice of the Lord:  
behold, to obey is better than Sacrifice,  
and to hearken than the Fat of Rams.  
When he supposes an awaken'd  
Conscience lamenting how insuffi-  
cient Thousands of Rams, and Ten  
Thousand Rivers of Oil would be,  
gives a very credit upon those  
things that are ever-  
lasting: He has shown  
what is good, and what  
requires of thee.

Sam. II. 22.  
Mic. VI. 8.

Of

Serm. II. *Man to his God*; but yet they have some unpolish'd Thoughts of their

Jon. I. 5. Duty: They had an Opinion of Prayer as a way to escape. Thus

Rom. II. *the Gentiles, who have not the Law,*  
14, 15. *do by nature the things contain'd in the Law; and these, having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves, which show the Work of the Law to be written in their Hearts.* 'Tis the

Parallel between one Ordinance and another, that I wou'd argue from: If mere Nature that surveys the Beauty of Creation and Providence, can show a God to our Hope in the *time of need*, it does equally oblige us to praise him for Mercys receiv'd. The Materials of the Service lie abroad, and may be fetch'd in from the common Favours of Life; for as

Job  
XXXV. 10. *God our Maker he gives Songs in the Night.*

§. 2. This Duty is distinguish'd from those that were Ceremonial, and only a *shadow of good things to come*. The Jews had their Law in *Tables*, but their Gospel in *Figures*. Many parts of their Service were to declare and nourish the hopes of

## the Duty of SINGING. 29

a Messiah. The Adoption that per-  
tain'd to 'em, the Glory, the Cove-  
nants, the giving of the Law, and the  
Promises, was because they were a  
People, of whom as concerning the  
Flesh Christ came. These had no  
further value in them than as they  
were establish'd by a temporary  
Command, and pointed to that ri-  
per Glory, those better things that  
God had reserv'd for us. But the  
Works that are purely moral are  
oftentimes mention'd apart from  
them; and when these two are  
put into the Ballance, the Cha-  
racter always weighs on one side:  
*The Lord has not so great Delight*, Sam.  
*in Burnt-Offering and Sacrifice, as* XV. 22.  
*in obeying the Voice of the Lord:*  
*behold, to obey is better than Sacrifice,*  
*and to hearken than the Fat of Rams.*  
When he supposes an awaken'd  
Conscience lamenting how insuffi-  
cient *Thousands of Rams, and Ten* Mic. VI. 8.  
*Thousand Rivers of Oil* would be,  
he puts a new credit upon those  
parts of Obedience that are ever-  
lasting and moral: *He has shown*  
*thee, O Man, what is good, and what*  
*the Lord thy God requires of thee.*

Serm.II. Of this kind are those Praises that we offer to him in the Ordinance of Singing. This is the plain sense of *David*, tho he liv'd in an Age when the Ceremonial Com-

mands had all their Force: *I will*  
 ps. LXIX. *praise the Name of God with a Song,*  
 30, 31. *I will magnify him with Thanksgiving;*  
*this also shall please the Lord better*  
*than an Ox or Bullock that has Horns*  
*and Hoofs.*

'Tis not my Province to answer Objections, that's a Service better plac'd; but I cannot be passive to one that usually assaults this Argument. Some tell us, that we may as fairly conclude for the use of Instrumental Musick in the Worship of God, because the *Jews* often brought it in thither. I shall give a very easy and general Answer, which I hope may both break this Difficulty, and lead us into the true Nature of that Service we are now oblig'd to. 'Tis certain, most of their moral Dutys had a Tincture of Ceremony in 'em, because something further was requir'd of 'em besides an Obedience to the Law: There was the  
 hope

## the Duty of SINGING.

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*hope of the Promise made unto the* Serm. II  
*Fathers ; unto which Promise the* Acts  
*twelve Tribes instantly serving God* XXIV. 6  
*Day and Night hop'd to come. That* 7.

this Expectation might be kept alive, they had the Figures and Shadows of the great Blessing united to their Services. I will show you this in a parallel Case: Prayer to God is undoubtedly establish'd upon another foot than that of the Types and Ceremonys; and yet they are so interwoven, that the Duty has a great deal peculiar in it, as it comes from them. There must be an Offering, their Faces are directed to the *House which God had chosen to place his Name there.* They had Seasons of doing it: *The multitudes stood praying without at the time of Incense.* Luk. I. 1

We read of the *Hours of Prayer:* Act. III.

They were to guard against all ceremonial Impuritys; and if any thing of this external Part was neglected, we sometimes find there's a frown of Providence to cloud the Work. God made a Breach upon David's Design, by striking Uzza dead (tho it's probable there

was

Serm. II. World, that there's nothing of  
 ~~~~~ Harmony or Entertainment in it;  
 and therefore if they would be
 pleas'd in the sense of Hearing,
 they must go for it to those things
 that are a long step from Religion.
 On the other hand, he attacks the
 Ordinance with the Prejudice and
 Sourness of those who condemn
 what they don't understand: and
 it's no wonder that a Service so
 useful to the Christian is thus op-
 pos'd. But certainly our having
 Voices, that are capable of doing
 their Work with pleasure this way,
 is both an Argument founded in
 Nature, and obliges to some Dili-
 gence for Qualification. We are
 a Chron. expressly told of those that taught
 XXIII. 13 to sing Praise. Why is it that God
 has ennobled us at such a Cost of
 Love, but that our Adorations
 may be distinguish'd from the more
 silent ones that other Creatures
 are giving? *The Sun, Moon, and*
 Psal. CXLVIII. *Stars, Dragons, Deeps, Fire, Hail,*
Snow, Wind and Vapours, Moun-
tains, Hills and Trees, Cattel, creep-
ing things and Fowl, praise the Name
of the Lord, and his Glory, which

the Duty of SINGING.

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is above the Heavens. But we are *Serm. II.*
to do it in another manner, as 
we have Souls to digest the Mate-
rials, and peculiar Organs to give
it vent : *With one Mind and one* *Rom. XV,*
Mouth we glorify God, even the Fa-6.
ther of our Lord Jesus Christ. There's
something in our Make that's e-
quivalent to an Institution; these
Capacitys of Preparation and Ut-
terance are given us to carry on
the Design : *My Lips shall greatly* *Pl. LXXI.*
rejoice when I sing unto thee, and my 23.
Soul which thou hast redeem'd.

II. This Duty is still more evi-
dent from the positive Institutions
of *God's Word.* I shall consider
this Argument in two Parts, as it
stands upon the *Foundation of the*
Prophets and Apostles. In the Old
Testament we find it commanded,
us'd and endear'd to our imitation
from several Persons, but especi-
ally him who is call'd *the sweet*
Psalmist of Israel. In the New we
have the same Exhortations, to
let us see that it's a continuing
Ordinance; and our Lord, *when he*
comes, expects to find us so doing.

S. 12

Term.II. §. 1. I begin with that part of
 the Argument that is grounded on
 the *Old Testament*; and what De-
 mand returns so often as of our
 Service to God this way? No Call
 to any Duty is more repeated, es-
 pecially in the Book of Psalms.
 But because there's an Objection al-
 ways ready against those Exhorta-
 tions to Singing which we find
 in the Old Testament, I will only
 turn you to such Passages as are
 Prophetick of our Worship under
 the Gospel. This is universally
 own'd, that many things in those
 times were written in a view of
 this last Dispensation. The Spirit
 in the *Prophets testify'd*, that not un-
 to themselves, but unto us they did
 minister the things that are now re-
 ported. From several of these
 Scriptures, it appears with the
 best Conviction to me, that God
 design'd to have singing of Psalms
 a part in his Worship now.

1 Pet. I.
 12.

The XLVIIth Psalm has a great
 deal in it that looks at these *last*
days, wherein God has *spoken to us*
by his Son. He is said to *go up with*
a Shout; this was true of our Medi-
 ator,

the Duty of SINGING. 37

ator, when *the Father rais'd him up* Serm. II.
from the Dead, and gave him Glory. ~~~~~
 Again, we there read that God ^{1 Pct. I. 21.}
reigns over the Heathen, and the Ver. 8, 9.
Princes of the People are gather'd,
even (or as it is in the Margin un-
to) *the People of the God of Abra-*
ham. And the reason he gives for
 it leads us into such a sense of the
 words, because *the Shields of the*
Earth belong unto God, and he is
greatly exalted. What a beautiful
 account is this of the Success the
 Gospel had, and *the Blessing of A-* Gal. III. 4.
braham that came on the Gentiles
thro Christ? Now, in this Psalm,
 we are commanded to *shout unto*
God, to sing Praises, to do it with
Understanding: The Call is repea-
 ted several times, which lets us
 see what our Work shou'd be when
 these glorious things took place.
 The LXVIIIth Psalm so plainly re-
 fers to Christ, that the Apostle Eph. IV.
 gives us the very words of it, in
 telling us, that *he ascended up on*
high, &c. And this Exhortation
 is mingled in the several parts of
 that account, that we *sing unto* Ver. 4.
him that rides on the Heavens; and
 particu-

Serim. II. particularly the *Heathen*, who were  once *rebellious*, are charg'd to do. *V. 32, 33.* it, because he receiv'd Gifts for them. Sing unto God, ye Kingdoms of the Earth.

The XCVth Psalm is almost repeated in the IIIrd and IVth Chapters to the *Hebrews*: From thence the Apostle fetches his Exhortations, to hear God's Voice, and believe his Word; which shows that it contains those Rules of Duty that we are to be guided by in the days of the Son of Man; and there we are call'd to come before his Presence with Thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with Psalms.

We have a cloud of Witnesses from the Prophets, who foretold the Grace that should come unto us. The Conversion of the Gentiles is express'd in this Language, That *LCXXXV. they shou'd come to Sion with Songs,*
10. &c. They shall sing for the Majesty
Isa. LI. 11. of the Lord. Songs shall be heard
Isa. XXIV. from the uttermost parts of the Earth,
14, 15. even Glcry to the Righteous. And in *Ch. XII.* another place, *The Ends of the Earth, the Inhabitants of the Rock*
 are

are to give Glory to the Lord, and Serm. II. they must declare his Praise in the Islands. The Preaching and Conquest of the Gospel is meant by publishing glad Tydings, and saying Rom. X. unto Sion, Thy God reigneth : And 15. when this is the Happines of any People, they shall lift up the Voice, Isa. LII. and with the Voice together they sing : 8, 9. They break forth into Joy, and sing together, when the Lord has made bare his holy Arm in the Eyes of all Nations, and all the Ends of the Earth come to see the Salvation of God. Time would fail me to bring in all that we meet with to this purpose; I will only sum up the Argument, That if God delign'd to abolish this Ordinance, and rase it out of his Worship, we can scarce think that he would have put the Duty and Joys of a Gospel-day into such Language.

§. 2. I proceed to those Commands that we have in the *New Testament* ; and these are plain enough to carry their own Evidence. The first I shall mention you have Eph. V. 19. *Speaking, as to your selves (or to one another) in Psalms,*
and

Serm. II. and Hymns, and spiritual Songs ;

~~~~~ singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. 'Tis apparent by this Scripture, that a secret Joy in God doth not come up to the Design of the Exhortation. A devout and warm Resentment of his Goodness to us is the Soul of all Duty, but this is not *speaking* in Psalms : The Phrase of the Advice lets us see that it must be different from Meditation, where the Soul is purely retir'd into it self, and shuts out the whole Creation. The *Melody in the Heart* is no Censure of the Voice : It only tells us, that besides the Pleasure of regular Sounds, we must have our Affections rais'd with the Substance and Matter of what is sung :

PL. CIII. 1. That *our Souls and all that is within us may praise the Lord* ; lest we fall under the Misery of those  
 Isa. XXIX who *honour him with their Lips,*  
 13. *but remove their Hearts far from him.*

Another Scripture, which is much to the same purpose, you have, Col. III. 16. *Let the Word of God dwell in you richly in all Wisdom,*

*the Duty of SINGING.* 41

dom, teaching and admonishing *Serm. I*  
(*l'un l'autre*) one another in Psalms, and  
Hymns, and spiritual Songs; singing  
with Grace in your Hearts unto the  
Lord. The Word that was trans-  
lated *your selves* in the other place,  
is here produc'd in its true and  
genuine Sense. The Context to  
each of these Scriptures is fill'd  
with Directions for general Ser-  
vice; the Advice in both of 'em  
is almost the same, only here we  
are bid to *let the Word of God dwell*  
*richly in us*; which answers the  
Design of this Ordinance two  
ways: *First*, as we are thereby  
the readier at accommodating the  
Psalms to our own or others oc-  
casions: and, *Secondly*, as it en-  
larges the Mind to understand and  
apply what we meet with in that  
great Bank of Experience. *My*  
*Lips shall praise thee*, says David, *Ps. CXI.*  
*when thou hast taught me thy Sta-* 171.  
*tutes.* This will help us to find  
our own case in those Psalms, that  
look as if they were either *perso-*  
*nal*, or wrapt up in *Judaisms*.  
When the Word of God dwells thus  
*richly in us*, it will form the  
Thoughts

Serm. II. Thoughts to a greater compass,  
 ~~~~~ and teach us to compare *Spiritual*

Rom. XV. *things with spiritual: for whatsoever*
 3. *was written aforetime is for our Ad-*
monition. We shall be Partners

with *David* in his Afflictions, and
 tast his Comforts as if they had
 been our own at the first hand.

Isa. LV. 3. And indeed the *Everlasting Cove-*
nant that God makes with us, is
 no other than *the sure Mercys of*
David. This will lead us with-
 in the Vail of Ceremony: By
 knowing the Fitness of the Types
 to their Substance, we shall not
 have our Thoughts shackled with
 the Phrase; but know that those
 Passages which seem to be of the
 narrowest meaning, and most con-
 fin'd to that Age, have a Gospel-
 Sense and Beauty in 'em.

Another Command you find
 Jam. V. 13. *Is any afflicted? let him*
pray: Is any merry? let him sing
Psalms. Perhaps the Word in our
 Translation is a little too light for
 the Frame of Spirit here design'd.
 It expresses a Temper that's very
 becoming those who are *Heirs of*
the Grace of Life, and shou'd re-
 joice

joyce evermore, being not appointed *Serm. II.*
unto Wrath, but to obtain Salvation! ~~~~~

by *Jesus Christ*. So that the usual Answer to this is frivolous, that it's a Duty only for those who are joyful: They may as well affirm, that Prayer obliges no further than when Affliction has gone before. The latter part of the Verse is no more limited than the former. Several Psalms are the Breathings of *David's* Spirit under his Distress. The CII is call'd *A Prayer of the Afflicted, when he is overwhelm'd, and pours out his Complaint before the Lord*. There was in those Believers a Love to God and a Hope in him, to gild the Darkness of Providence; and should not the Christian be acquainted with these in all his Adversity? The Exhortation therefore stands unshaken; *Sing unto the Lord, ye Saints of his, for his Anger 4, 5.* *endures but for a moment; in his Favour is Life: Weeping may be for a night, but Joy comes in the morning.* Who's to blame that we are not in a Temper for the Duty? Is our Sadness so irregular and violent,

Serm. II. *lent, that we refuse to be comforted?* Had we rather allow an Un-

ruliness of Grief, and *charge God foolishly*, than take the Methods of Composure that he has directed us to? Never let that be an Excuse, which in most cases is it self a Crime; but beg rather, that God

Ps. LL. 15. *would put you into Tune: Open thou my Lips, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise.* Perhaps there's a Cloud upon your Comforts at present; but have you no *Hope towards God, or Delight in his Promises?* Look forwards, and

Ps. XCVI. *rejoice before him, because he will come to judg the Earth with Righteousness, and his People with Truth.* Afflictions don't deserve to hinder

Phil. IV. 6. *you: Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by Prayer, and Supplication, and (this Method of) Thanksgiving, make your Requests known unto God.*

III. We are directed by *Example* to this Duty. These things are recorded *for our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the Earth are come.* The Historys of God's People

the Duty of SINGING. 45

People are not a dry Entertain-Serm.II.
ment; they don't tell us matters remote and foreign: but they are either a Test to show us what we are, or a Rule to tell us what we should be. I'll begin with the *original Pattern*: We find our blessed Lord imploy'd in singing the Praises of the Father. 'Tis true, a great part of his Duty is recorded for our Hope and Wonder, and engages to no Imitation; such as his working Miracles, suffering the Wrath of God, satisfying the Law, by which he *brought in an Everlasting Righteousness*. These are not our Rule, but the Refuge we must *flee to, the Hope that is set before us*. He trod the Wine-press *Isa.LXIII.* alone, and of the People there was *3.* none with him. But as to the Purity and Devotion of his Life, we should be *Followers of him as dear Eph.IV.I.* Children. Now when he was to part with his Disciples, and took leave in an Ordinance that should continue till they met again, he *sung an Hymn* with 'em. This could not be merely in compliance with the Jewish Custom at the Passover;

Serm. II. fover; for that Solemnity expir'd
 then, and he had appointed another *in remembrance* of himself and his second *Coming*. His Soul was full of holy Reverence and Love to the Father. He knew the Work of Redemption was now almost finish'd; and as this would engage the Songs of Heaven, so he employs his Voice in the Service of his Heart: He glorifies God both in Spirit and Body, as was
 PL. LXV. 2. becoming one who had *Grace pour'd into his Lips*. Those words of *David* were eminently design'd for
 PL. XL. 3. him; *The Lord has put a new Song into my mouth, even Praise to our God*. This, I say, was his Language, who said afterwards, *Lo, I come; in the Volume of thy Book it is written of me*. This is the *Example* that he has left for us *to follow his steps*.

David's Practice in this Duty makes a whole Book. I know how quick some People are with their Objection, That our Case is not his; but I don't see how that's any bar to the concurrence of Faith and Hope with his *Meditations*. Nothing could be more
 per-

the Duty of SINGING: 47

personal than *the changing his Be-* Sermon.II.
haviour before Abimelech; and yet upon that occasion he desires others
to *magnify the Lord with him*, and that they might *exalt his Name to-* Psalm
gether. And we find his Psalms XXXIV.3
us'd by People who were remov'd
the length of several Ages from
him. *Hezekiah*, and such as join'd
in the Passover with him, *prais'd* 2 Chron.
the Lord with the Words of David, XXIX.30
and Asaph the Seer: and they sung
Praises with gladness, and bow'd
their Heads and worship'd. We
find the same upon another emi-
nent Turn of Providence; *They* Ezr.III.10
prais'd God after the Ordinance of
David King of Israel. The Apo-
stles and holy Men of God in later
times were thus employ'd. *Paul*
and Silas sung Praises to God in the
Stocks: The Multitude of the Dis-
ciples, and others, did it, when
Christ made his publick Entry into
Jerusalem. And when the Apostle
is giving Directions about the Con-
duct of our publick Worship, he
speaks of himself, *I will sing with* 1 Cor.XIV
the Spirit, and with Understanding 15.
also. Nay, methinks, we may
look

Serm.II. look much higher for Examples :

~ This was the Work of the Angels ;
 Job *When the Foundations of the Earth*
 XXXVIII *were laid, the Morning-Stars sung*
 7. *together, and all the Sons of God*
shouted for Joy.

IV. There's something in our
 Frame and Composition as *Chris-*
tians, that may endear this Ordi-
 nance to us. *Fornication, Unclean-*
 Eph. V. *ness, Covetousness, Filthiness, and*
 3, 4. *foolish Talking* are not to be nam'd
among us, as becometh Saints ; but
rather giving of thanks.

§. 1. 'Tis a means of further
 Instruction. *Moses writ a Song,*
 Dent. *which must not depart from the*
 XXXI. 19 *mouths of the Children of Israel, lest*
they should forget the wonderful Works
of God. We speak to our selves,
and admonish one another in Psalms
and Hymns. This gives the Mind
an advantage to dwell upon the
things of God with a pleasing
Meditation ; and, in this sense,
 Prov. XVI. *the Sweetness of the Lips increaseth*
 21. *Learning.*

§. 2. 'Tis a proper Effect of the
 Pl. LXIII. *Believer's Joy. Because thy Loving-*
 3, 4. *kindness*

. *the Duty of SINGING.* 49

kindness is better than Life, my Lips Sermon. II.
shall praise thee. My Soul shall be
satisfy'd with Marrow and Fatness ;
and my Mouth shall praise thee with
joyful Lips. 'Tis the early Voice
of the Convert, The Kings of the Psalm
Earth shall praise thee, when they CXXXviii
hear the words of my mouth ; yea, 4. 5.
they shall sing in the ways of the
Lord. Men will show their plea-
sure abroad. Such as are govern'd
by a sensual Taste of things, feel
a Delight that cannot be pent up.
They declare themselves in Roar-
ing and Folly, and an Excess of
Riot. Now 'tis this Ordinance
that fixes the distinction between
profane and sacred Mirth: Be not Eph. V. 18,
drunk with Wine, but be ye fill'd with 19.
the Spirit, speaking to your selves in
Psalms. I need but remind you
of the Example we have newly
parted with. When Paul and Si-
las were in the Stocks, confin'd
with Scandal and Danger, they
sung so loud, that the Prisoners
heard them. This was the Fruit
of that Redemption they felt in
themselves, and preach'd to others ;
and it made good that Promise,

D

That

Serm. II. That *the Wilderness should be as Eden, and the Desert as the Garden*

Ha. LI. 3.

of the Lord; Joy and Gladness being found therein, Thanksgiving and the Voice of Melody. This becomes

the Triumph we have in God more than Boasting and Wrangling: It's a Duty to the praise of his Grace,

who has made us accepted in the Beloved. Thus we should begin to enjoy a Mercy. When God was about to open a Spring in the Wilderness, Israel sung a Song. Pro-

Numb. XXI. 17.

vidence has testify'd to the Value of a Joy that shows it self this way. When Jehosaphat had ap-

2 Chron. XX. 22.

pointed Singers to the Lord, who went out before the Army, and they begun to sing and praise; God set Ambushments against the Children of Moab and Ammon, and they were smitten down before Judah.

§. 3. 'Tis a good means of declaring our Religion to the World. These two are made the same thing, Praising God and Teaching others; I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy

Rom. XV. 9.

Name. Nay, Christ himself is brought in as making known his

the Duty of SINGING.

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Doctrine by this method: *Saying*, Serm. II.

I will declare thy Name unto my Bre- Heb. II. 12.

thren; in the midst of the Congrega-

tion I will sing praise unto thee.

And well then may it be said of
his People; *It is good to sing Prais-* Psalm
es unto our God, for it is pleasant, CXLVII. 1
and Praise is comely. Thus we ren-

der unto him the Calves of our Lips. Ho. LXIV. 2

It may be, there's no one Ordinance in either Publick or Family Worship so fitted to this Design.

I could show you from the Learned Bishop of *Salisbury's* History, how the *Reformation* in *England* prosper'd by the mighty Zeal of People in this Work; and God own'd it with the same Blessing in *France*: but these things will have a more natural place among the Exhortations to this Duty. I'll therefore leave this Subject to the last part of this Design; and thither I refer you.

§. 4. It *promotes* and sweetens other Ordinances. 'Tis good to begin with it; *to serve the Lord* Ps. C. 2.
with Gladness, and come before his
presence with Singing. The Services of God's House are so far from

Serm. II. clashing, that they are a mutual
 Advantage to one another. Thus

we find *Nab. IX.* *One fourth part of the Day they read in the Law of God, and another fourth was taken up in worshipping; and when they had cry'd unto him, the Levites call'd upon 'em, to praise his glorious Name, which is exalted above all Blessing and Praise.* 'Twas thus

that our Lord concluded his Feast of Love with the Disciples; *After Supper they sung an Hymn.* This

Variety in publick Worship makes it more easy and beautiful. The

Apostle blames the *Corinthians* for the Confusion of their Assemblies,

I Cor.
 XIV. 26.

That every one of 'em had a Psalm, a Doctrine, &c. but he allows the

Parts themselves. It seems the most natural Close of our Devotions.

When we have been receiving the *Good Tidings of Salvation*, and have

heard it *said unto Sion, Thy God reigneth*; 'tis the very Letter of

the Prophecy, that *with the Voice*

PLCXLIX *together we should sing.* The Lord
 4, 5, 6. *doth therefore take pleasure in his*

People, and beautify the Meek with Salvation: That the Saints may be

joyful

the Duty of SINGING.

53

joyful in Glory, and sing aloud upon their Beds; that the high Praises of God may be in their mouths. Sermon II.

§. 5. The *Heavenly State* which every upright Soul is breathing to, comes under this Description. When *they that are in their Graves hear the Voice of the Son of Man and live, they'll rise in Tune. Thy dead Men shall live, together with my dead Body shall they arise.* Isa. XXVI. 19. *Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust.* 'Tis the only Ordinance of this World, that we meet with in a better; *Prophecys shall fail, Tongues will cease, and the common means of Knowledge vanish away.* 1 Cor. XIII. 8. But it's the Blessedness of those that *dwell in the Building of God, the House not made with hands, that they shall ever praise him.* Rev. XIV. 3. *The 144000 sing a new Song before the Throne.* Now surely we should not have had the Joys and Worship of a dear Eternity put into these Names, if there were not something in the present *Sweets of Duty to guide our Conception of it. This is the Employment of Saints and Angels, a Meditation upon those Wonders*

D 3.

that

Serm. II. that are recorded in Heaven, with
 everlasting Shouts of Praise to
 him that sits upon the Throne, and to
 the Lamb. 'Tis in these terms

that God's own Delight is ex-
 Zeph. III. press'd; *He will rest in his Love,*
 17. *and rejoice over them with singing.*
 'Tis a good way to allure our
 Value for that better Church, when
 the most delightful part of Wor-
 ship here is to give it a Title. The
 Faith and Hope, that are con-
 tending upwards, do never so
 well employ themselves, as in the
 Duty of admiring God; because
 it's so much the same with the Vi-
 sion into which they shall expire.

I'll conclude the whole with the
 Apostle's Advice, grounded on
 Heb. XIII. this very Argument, *We have here*
 14, 15. *no continuing City, but we seek one*
to come; 'tis the desire of our Souls
 that it may be, and we have the
 Word of a Redeemer that it shall
 be: *By him therefore let us offer the*
Sacrifice of Praise unto God conti-
nually, that is, the Fruit of our Lips,
giving thanks unto his Name.

The EXCELLENCE
of the Duty of
SINGING.

SERMON III.

PSAL. CXLVII. 1.

*Praise ye the Lord, for it is good
to sing Praise to our God; for
it is pleasant, and Praise is
comely.*

TIS the third Part of the
Subject that has fallen to
my share, and which I
am to consider at this time; *i. e.*
To represent the *Excellence* of this
noble Duty, and recommend it to
your Love and Esteem. I shall
D 4. confine

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Ser. III. confine my self strictly to this single Branch of the Subject, and endeavour to keep within the limits prescrib'd me.

EXCELLENCE, or the just Commendation that belongs to a thing, may be consider'd either as something *real* and inherent in the Subject; or as something *relative*, and in the respect it bears to other things. The former signifies the *intrinsic* Value of a thing, or what it has in it self to recommend it: The latter signifies its *Preference* to other things, or what there is in it that exceeds others of a like kind.

I shall proceed upon these general Measures in the present Case, and represent the Excellence or Value of this Duty, under this double Consideration of it.

I. Consider it more *Absolutely*, and as it is in it self.

II. More *Relatively*, and as it stands in comparison with others.

Under

Under the former I shall shew *Set. III.* wherein it agrees, and what it has more in common with others: Under the latter, wherein it excels, and what it has more appropriate and peculiar to it self.

1. I shall consider it more absolutely. And the Excellence of it will appear, if you view the whole Frame of it, and consider it in all its Parts; viz.

§. 1. Consider the *Matter* that is to be sung; in the general, The Praises of God: That I may shew *Ps. IX. 14.* forth all thy Praise. And the Apostle expresses it by *Psalms*, and *Hymns*, and *spiritual Songs*; which perhaps may be design'd to signify nothing more than the several Titles and Divisions of the Book of Psalms.

But then this must be understood in the fullest Latitude: Whatsoever tends to the Praise of the Almighty, every Representation of his Glory, and every Discovery of his Will. And if you consult the Sacred Psalmody, you shall find that the Psalms that are

Ser. III. upon record, are full of various Excellencies, and one of the most lofty and noble Parts of the Sacred Writings. Particularly,

We are to sing the Praises of *Creating Power*. To this purpose divers of the Psalms of *David* are particularly directed; that recount the Glories of the great Creator, and celebrate his Praise, in the stately Fabrick of Heaven and Earth, in the rich Furniture and vast Variety of Beings, in all the Impresses of his Glory upon the Creation, and all the Instances of his eternal Power and Godhead.

PS. XIX. *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his*

1, 2. *Handy-work, &c. Thou art great, clothed with Majesty and Honour; coverest thy self with Light as with a*

PS. CIV. *Garment; stretchest out the Heavens beginning. as a Curtain: He layeth the Beams of his Chamber in the Water, maketh the Clouds his Chariot, and walketh upon the Wings of the Wind. Thou laid'st the Foundation of the Earth, that it should not be remov'd for ever, and cover'dst it with the Deep as with a Garment, &c.*

And

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And so in the Frame of our Ser. III. own Nature; the curious and wonderful Workmanship of Body and Soul, that carry a lively Resemblance, and bear a strong Impression of the Divine Being and Perfection, in every Member and Faculty of each. *Thou hast possess'd* Psalm my Reins: *Thou hast cover'd me in* CXXXIX my Mother's Womb. *I will praise* 13, 14. thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Marvellous are thy Works, and that my Soul knoweth right well. My Substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest Parts of the Earth. Thine Eye did see my Substance yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my Members were written; which in time were fashion'd, when as yet there was none of them.

Again, We sing the Praises of Redeeming Love. To this several of the noblest Psalms of David expressly refer, that foretel the Coming of the Messiah, and describe the Glorys of his Person, and the Fruits of his Death. The Psalmist ps. XLV. sings of the Excellence and Glory of the King; and particularly describes,

Ser. III. scribes, in lofty Numbers, the Kingdom and Priesthood, the Sufferings and Triumphs of the Redeemer. So the great *Hallel* sung by the Jews at the Solemnity of the Passover, and is probably thought by Learned Men to be the Hymn sung by our Lord at the Institution of the Supper. I might mention the *Penitential* Psalms that describe his Mercy to humble Penitents, and abound in Expressions of the tenderest Kindness, as well as the lowest Abasement.

The Song of *Solomon* is a divine and rapturous, as well as a lofty and artful Piece of Poetry; describing at once the Beauty and Excellence of the Redeemer's Person, and the Tenderness of his Affection and Care; the Intercourses of divine Love in all the various Workings of Kindness and Respect between Christ and his Church.

And if you look into the New Testament, we have the Song of *Mary* upon the Message of the Angels, and the Salutation of *Elizabeth*: Where she celebrates the condescending Favour of the Almighty

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mighty to her low and humble **Str. III.**
 State, when he abased the Mighty
 and the Proud; and his Faithful-
 ness and Mercy to his People *Is-*
rael. There is the Song of *Za-* **Luke L67.**
charias; where he recounts at
 large his Faithfulness to his Pro-
 mise in sending the *Messiah*, and
 the mighty Benefits to the World
 by his Appearance: And the rap-
 turous Song of old *Simeon* at the **Luke L24**
 sight of the Infant-Redeemer.

Again, We sing the Praises of
Providential Care: His regular
 Government and particular Notice
 of all his Creatures. He daily
 supports the Being, and supplies
 the Wants of innumerable Crea-
 tures, and exercises a wise and
 equal Care of every one. He di-
 rects the Course of publick Af-
 fairs by a sure and unerring Hand,
 and over-rules the Disorders of
 them by seasonable Interposures
 and powerful Influence. Many of
 the Psalms of *David* are dedicated
 to the Praise of his Providence.
 He describes his Omnipresence and
 particular Observance of every
 thing: *Whither shall I flee from* [Psalm
CXXX
vby 7, 8.]

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Ser. III. *thy Presence? Whither shall I go
from thy Spirit? If I ascend up into
Heaven; if I make my bed in Hell;
if I take the Wings of the Morning,
and dwell in the uttermost parts of*

the Earth; behold thou art there, &c.
He describes his general Goodness
and his tender Mercy over all his
Works; *The Earth is full of the
Goodness of the Lord. The Eyes of
all look unto thee, and thou givest
them their Food in due season. He
openeth his hand, and satisfieth the
Desires of all the Living. He ce-
lebrates his own Deliverance out of
the hands of all his Enemys, and out
of the hands of Saul.*

Particularly, The extraordinary
Appearances of God in the World,
both of Judgment and Mercy; in
the unusual Displays of himself, as
well as in the more stated and or-
dinary Course of things. This has
been always Matter of Praise to
the People of God, and the Sub-
ject of some of their noblest Songs.
Such was the Song of *Moses*;
where he magnifies the *Arm of the
Lord* in so miraculous Appearance,
that at once carry'd with it sudden
Deliverance

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Deliverance to his People, surprizing Ruin to their Enemys, and Terroure and Amazement to all the World. Such was his dying Song; where he gives a lively and affecting Description of the distinguishing Favour and rich Bounty of God to *Israel*, and all the Terrours of Vengeance and Wrath that would come upon them, for their Rebellion and Abuse. And so the Song of *Deborah* and *Barak*, who judg'd *Israel* when God subdu'd the *Canaanites* before them, is full of beautiful Figures and noble Flights; and is remarkable as well for its artful Contrivance, as its admirable Sense.

I shall close this Head with this one Reflection: That as the Sacred Poesy is one of the noblest Parts of all the Divine Writings, so it vastly exceeds, in the Sublimeness of Subject and Majesty of Expression, the finest Compositions of human Wit, and the most labour'd Productions of Art. And 'tis greatly to be lamented, that that noble Art, which sprung from God, and was devoted to his Praise,

Ser. III. Praise, is so sadly degenerated from its original Design and proper Use. The celebrated *Poets* of the present Age have debas'd the Majesty of Verse, and prostituted the *Muses* to the Service of their Lusts; and so the loftiest Numbers and the sweetest Verse have been employ'd in describing the fanciful Atchievements and the fulsom Praise of some little *Hero* or leud *Amour*. The impure Mixtures of the finest Poems offend and shock a pious or a vertuous Mind; and render them full of Snare and Danger to others: like luscious *Poison*, that pleases and corrupts, easily insinuates and enters deep; and the higher a relish it gives, the more surely destroys.

§. 2. Let us consider the *Subject* that is to be employ'd in singing the Praises of God. 'Tis the Exercise of the whole Man. It employs the Facultys and Members of Soul and Body. It engages the full Strength of Nature. For instance,

There must be a Union and Harmony of all the Powers of the Soul.
They

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They must all concur, and be set right to sing the Praises of God. *~*
I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole Heart. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name. The Heart is the Seat of Life and the Spring of Motion, that diffuses Life into every Part, and feeds the vital Pulse in every Vein. The Heart is the Life and Soul of every Duty, and we are expressly requir'd to make Melody in our Heart. The Understanding is the noble and distinguishing Power of the Soul; and we must sing Praises with Understanding: *I will sing with the Spirit, and with Understanding.* Which, tho it should be meant of the Understanding of others, i. e. that they may understand what is sung (as may be gather'd from v. 19.) yet does however clearly suppose, and more strongly infer his own. We must distinctly apprehend, and rightly conceive the Sense and Meaning of what we sing. It requires the proper Exercise of all the Affections, the suitable working of the natural Passions. answerable
to

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Ser. III. to the various Matter and the different Subject of our Song.

Yea, Singing requires the Exercise of all the *Graces*, and the most heavenly and exalted Frame of Mind. 'Tis no low and common Temper of Soul, that is suitable to the high Praises of God.

Col. III. 16 We must sing *with Grace in our Hearts*. For instance, with an humble *Reverence* and holy *Awe*, under the sense of his infinite Distance and glorious Excellence,

Exod. XV. *who is fearful in Praises, working Wonders*. With Divine Love: An affectionate Sense of his Loveliness and Perfection; a Heart inflam'd with Love to God, as the most amiable Being and Fountain of all Perfection, and strongly aspiring and tending towards him. With heavenly Joy: An Exultation of Heart; the Risings and Overflowings of the Soul, from the Fulness of inward Sense, and Strength of inward Resentment. We must be

Pf. IX. 2. *glad and rejoice; and make a joyful noise, rejoice and sing Praise*. With real *Gratitude*: A kindly Resentment of divine Favours; a Heart deeply

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deeply affected with his various Ser. III. Goodness, and freely dispos'd to proper Acknowledgments and Returns, &c.

And then the *Members* of the Body must be employ'd too; and it engages all the noble and excellent Parts. The *Tongue* that is our *Glory* is the great Instrument of Praise, and constantly employ'd in singing to the Lord: *My Glory* Ps. XXX. shall sing Praise to thee, and not be silent. The *Lips*; *Because thy Loving-kindness is better than Life, my Lips shall praise thee.* The *Mouth*; *My Mouth shall praise thee with joyful Lips.* Then was our *Mouth fill'd with Laughter* and *our Tongue with Songs.* Our *Breath* and *Voice* must be employ'd; we must sing with the *Voice of a Psalm*, and with the *Voice of Joy and Praise.* And, *Let every thing that hath Breath praise the Lord.*

Not to mention, that under the Law they prais'd God with *Dancing* and *clapping* their hands; *shouting* for Joy, and playing upon the *Viol* and *Harp*, and all the Instruments of Musick.

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Ser. III. §. 3. Consider the *Exercise* it
 ~~~~~ self. 'Tis a noble Exercise suitable  
 to the glorious Object it's em-  
 ploy'd about, and the excellent  
 Subject it employs. There are fe-  
 veral Propertys of singular Excel-  
 lence. For instance;

'Tis a great *Solemnity* of Gospel-  
 Worship. That it was practis'd  
 under the Law, appears by the  
 whole Book of Psalms; and is not,  
 I suppose, call'd in question by  
 any: That 'tis renew'd and con-  
 tinu'd under the Gospel, has been  
 already prov'd. I am only to ar-  
 gue from thence.

'Tis not, I think, a merely na-  
 tural Duty, much less an arbitrary  
 one, that can be justly reckon'd  
 among the Inventions of Men, or  
 to draw its Original from the  
 Wisdom of this World. 'Tis  
 an Institution of Gospel-Worship,  
 that bears the Impress of divine

Col. III. 16 *Authority*, is consecrated by the  
 Mat. XXVI *Example* of the Redeemer, and to  
 30. be perform'd by the help of the  
 Eph. V. 18. *Divine Spirit*: *Be fill'd with the*  
*Spirit, speaking to your selves in*  
 1 Cor. XIV *Psalms, &c.* And, I will sing with  
 the

*the Duty of SINGING.* 69

*the Spirit and with Understanding: Ser. III.*  
*i. e. by the Assistance of the Spirit of God, as well as with the Exercise of my own.*

It has been the constant Practice of the Church of God in every Age, and is a standing Part of our solemn Worship. And indeed it gives a *Solemnity* to Divine Worship, and adds a certain *State* to every other part. It carries a Sweetness and a Majesty in it, gives an Air and Delight to it, and is one of the principal *Glories* of the Gospel Worship.

Besides, 'tis a *spiritual* Service. Spirituality is the distinguishing Character of every Part of Gospel Worship; as we are to have a more direct eye to God who is a Spirit, and more especially to regard the Workings and Exercise of our own Spirit: *To worship him* Joh. IV. 24 *in Spirit and in Truth.*

Now tho the Ceremony and State of the legal Worship, and especially of the Temple-Service, requir'd many musical Instruments and great external Pomp; yet *singing the Praises of God* is very  
futable

Ser. III. futable to the Purity of Gospel-Worship, and a very great Exercise of Spirituality. 'Tis a spiritual Object we are wholly to attend; The Glory and Perfection of the Divine Being. We eye him and terminate on him in the most direct and immediate manner. And 'tis the proper Exercise of our own Spirit: *I will sing with the Spirit and with Understanding.* And tho there is a Concurrence of Soul and Body, and the one is employ'd as well as the other; yet the Soul is the proper Agent, the Body only the Instrument of the Soul, or the *Organ* thro which it sings the Praises of God.

Indeed it requires the best Exercise of the Soul, as 'tis proper to pure unbody'd Spirits: That we be *fill'd with the Spirit, speaking to our selves in Psalms, &c.* The Mind should be wholly abstracted from all sensible Objects, and deeply intent in the Contemplation of the Divine Glory; and 'tis never more spiritual, than in the right Performance of this heavenly Work.

Further;

*the Duty of SINGING:* 7

Further; 'Tis a *comely* Exercise. Ser.

'Tis good to sing Praise to our God, *and Praise is comely.* Comeliness <sup>Psa</sup> CXL

or Decency is the Sutableness of things one to another, and a certain Agreeableness between them; when there is a due Proportion, or at least a proper Sutableness between Persons or Things, as it may be respectively apply'd: as in a comely Face or regular Building.

Now there is a mighty Decency in this Case, and it well becomes us to sing the Praises of God. Nothing we can do is more worthy of God, or better agrees to our selves. Nothing is more sutable to the Distance and Relation between God and his Creatures. When the heavenly King is surrounded with loud Acclamations of joyful Subjects, his Excellence and Perfection proclaim'd and exalted by the highest Praise; his wonderful Works are magnify'd and admir'd in triumphant Acknowledgments, and his Bounty and Love celebrated and ador'd with Hallelujahs of Joy: When every Mouth is fill'd with his Praise, and every Place

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III. resounds and ecchoes back his Name; nothing is more agreeable in it self, or has a more delightful lovely Appearance to the World.

Finally, 'Tis highly acceptable and pleasing to God. 'Tis an Honour to the Almighty (such as a Creature is capable of) to sing his Praise: And God is pleas'd with the Service, both as his own Appointment, and the highest Expression of our Esteem. He is the proper Object and the glorious Theme, and has sometimes given signal Marks of his Approbation.

Eph.V.19. 'Tis *making Melody in our Hearts to the Lord.* 'Tis Melody to the LORD: 'Tis grateful in the Ears of the Almighty, as Melody and Musick is in ours. He *delights* in the Praises of his Saints, as he *inhabits* the Praises of *Israel.* The Voice of their sincere Praise is a pleasant Sound: The Breath of the Praise, like the *Smoke* of the Sacrifice, or the *Cloud* of Incense ascends to God in a sweet perfume. 'Tis an *Odour* of a *fragrant* smell, and with such *Sacrifices* God well pleas'd.

§. 4. Consider the *Ends* and *Uses* Ser. III. of it. 'Tis not a mere Solemnity; a Piece of empty State; only to give Life and Airs to the more grave and solemn Parts of Worship, or a more sensible Relish of Pleasure to the Service of God. 'Tis a profitable Exercise, and is of admirable Benefit and Use. For instance,

'Tis very *Instructing*. There is a rich Variety of excellent Matter in the Sacred Psalms, suitable to all the Conditions of Life, and all the Workings of an holy Soul: Many rare Discoverys of divine Truth, and many rich Experiences. The Title of divers Psalms is *Maschil*, i.e. A Psalm giving Instruction.

Now singing Praises is very profitable for the improving of our Understanding and Knowledge of the Truth. Many a Beam of Divine Light darts into the Mind, and shines clear and strong. The Experiences of other holy Souls instruct us in the Knowledge of our own. And so of all the ways of Improvement by the Divine Word, as Reading, Hearing, &c.

Ser. III. this is none of the least considerable, both as to the clearer Knowledge of the Divine Will, and the better Acquaintance with our

Eph.V.19. selves. *Speaking to your selves in Psalms, &c.* communing with one another about them: And, *Teach-*

Col.III.16 *ing and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns:* Where *Teaching* may refer to Matters of Faith and Doctrine, and *Admonishing* to Rules of Life and Duty. And so we may considerably grow in the Knowledge of the Truth, and abound with practical Directions for the Government of Life. And whatsoever is the Subject of the Psalm we sing, may be profitably improv'd by wise Accommodation to our selves, or at least by proper Meditations upon it.

Again, 'Tis an *Affecting* Exercise, peculiarly fitted with special Advantage to raise holy Affections of Soul, and enliven every Grace. The Thoughts have more leisure to work, and are more intensely fix'd, while the Sound is dilated and drawn out to so great a length, and the Mind employ'd with so much

much Solemnity. And the same thing will more powerfully move, and more sensibly affect, when 'tis devoutly sung, than when 'tis ever so carefully read. Thus Singing will affect the Soul with an inward Grief and the deepest Sorrow in Penitential Psalms, and with the warmest Love and Joy in Psalms of Praise. It will raise and dilate the Mind, and give the best advantage to the strongest Workings of Affection. Thus the Hearts of holy Men have been sometimes quicken'd and drawn forth in Raptures of Love and Extasys of Delight. They have been, as it were, fluttering upon the Wing, and ready to rise, and mount, and fly away. St. Austin relates of himself at his first Conversion ; *O how much have I wept, how exceedingly moved and affected, at the Hymns and Songs and harmonious Voices of the Church ! Those Voices pierc'd my Ears ; thy Truth enter'd my Soul ; devout Affections were rais'd, Tears flow'd, &c.* To this purpose the Testimony and Experience of the famous Beza is very

Ser. III. remarkable, That when he came  
 ~~~~~ into the Assembly, while they  
 Beza in were singing the Praises of God,
 Pſal. XCI. he found himself suddenly inspir'd
 with a divine Warmth, and
 strangely affected with Love and
 Joy; so that the Assembly seem'd
 to him as the Gate of Heaven, or
 an Entrance into Glory.

Again; 'tis an *Entertaining* and
 Pſal. pleasant Work: *'Tis good to sing*
 CXLVII. 1 *Praise, for it is pleasant.* 'Tis a
 religious Entertainment, a divine
 Repast to an holy Soul, by which
 it gives vent to its inward Resent-
 ments, and takes in an agreeable
 Pleasure. 'Tis a sweet Solace and
 Delight in Circumstances of Pros-
 perity and Ease, to sing the Prais-
 es of God; and 'tis most peculi-
 arly suitable and proper at such a
 time: *If any be merry, let him sing*
 Jam. V. 13. *Psalms.* In the time of Prosperity
 Eccl. VII. 14. *rejoice.*

This will take off the Mind
 from low Delights and carnal
 Mirth, that are apt to divert and
 defile; and take it up in the most
 proper Exercise, and be at the
 same time a noble Employment
 and

and Entertainment too. 'Twill Ser. III.
enliven our Spirits, and refine our
Joys; 'twill yield a Refreshment
to the Mind, tir'd with other holy
Exercifes, and amidst all the other
Delights of Life be constant Me-
lody and Mufick to the Soul: *They* Act. II. 47.
continu'd daily with one accord in
the Temple, and breaking Bread from
House to House, did eat their Meat
with Gladnefs and Singlenefs of Heart,
praising the Lord. And 'tis faid of
the Difciples, at the Afcenfion of
our Lord, *They worfhip'd him, and* Luke
return'd to Jerufalem with great Joy, XXIV. 53-
and were continually in the Temple
bleffing and praising God.

Laftly, 'Tis very comforting and
fupporting: 'Tis the great Re-
freshment of an afflicted State, as
well as the Entertainment of a
more prosperous one: 'Tis a
mighty Relief to a Spirit opprefs'd
with Cares and Griefs; it exhila-
rates and revives a drooping and
languifhing Soul, and raifes and
enlarges the Heart when 'tis funk
down and contracted within it-
felf, and has fometimes yielded
Confolation and Support under

Ser. III. the closest Confinement and the severest Sufferings. Thus *Paul* and

Act. XVI. *Silas* in a close Prison, fastned in the Stocks, in the Darknes of the Night, reliev'd their Spirits, and delighted their Souls by singing the Praises of God. And the holy Psalmist tells us his Experience,

PL. CXIX. *Thy Statutes have been my Songs in the House of my Pilgrimage.* They have furnish'd me with matter of Praise in my Wilderness State, and in my Wandrings thro this World, and have refresh'd my Soul in all the wearisom Stages and Fatigues of Life.

To this purpose the primitive Christians, under the third Persecution by *Trajan*, met together very early on a stated day, to sing a Hymn to *Christ* their God, as is related by *Pliny*, an Heathen Writer, in his Account to the Emperor. And that Passage of the renown'd and heroick *Luther* is worthy Observation, who was wont to tell *Melancthon* (a very wise and learned, but a more timorous and fearful Man) under the great Discouragements and dark Prospects
of

Plin. Epist.
97.

the Duty of SINGING. 79

of things at the beginning of the Ser. of Reformation: *Come, says he, let us sing the 46th Psalm, and let Earth and Hell do it's worst.*

I shall only further observe, with relation to each of these Advantages of Singing, that they extend to others as well as to our selves. We are to speak to our selves, or to one another, in *Psalms*; and to teach and admonish one another, *even* the same word as before: 'Tis mutually beneficial, and of extensive Use. All concur together in this holy Exercise, and each one excites and assists the other. Every other Person, that sings the Praises of God, helps to excite the Affection, and raise the Devotion of my Soul; and my Singing helps to raise and excite another's. The Breath of Praise mutually fans one another's Souls, kindles a divine Heat, and blows it up into a Flame; and so every one contributes something to another's Good, and receives some help from every other.

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Ser. III.

II. I shall consider it more *relatively*, and in *comparison* with other Dutys. This will not be any odious Comparison or invidious Preference, like those among Men, to sink the Character and darken the Reputation of one, to raise and brighten another. 'Tis usual, in the Scriptures, to make Comparisons of Graces and Dutys as well as Sins, and to give the Preference of one to another; and 'tis a proper measure, by which to take the value of things, to compare them with others of the same kind, and shew wherein they excel. Thus our Lord speaks of the

Mat. XXII *First and Great Command*, that
38. which is chief and principal in Value as well as in Order; and so

Mat. V. 19. we read of the *Least Command*. And the Apostle makes a comparison among the principal Graces, and gives the just Preference of

1 Cor. XIII. 13. *one to the rest: Now remaineth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but the greatest of these is Charity; i. e. it excels the other two.* And

1 Cor. XII. he speaks of *coveting the best Gifts;*
and

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and of shewing a more excellent way. Ser. III.

There is a real Difference in the Degrees of their Excellence, as there is in their Natures and Kinds.

But then this must be understood to be in some *certain* Respects only, not in *every* Respect: for every Grace and Duty has its proper Excellence as well as its proper Place, and so every one exceeds another in some certain Respects and to some special Purposes; so that this is design'd only to give the true value, and assign the proper place of one, not to prejudice or disparage any.

To bring this down to the present Case: There are other Dutys of Religion that, for instance, are more absolutely necessary in our present State, and all things consider'd, than singing the Praises of God; such as Repentance towards God, and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ: These are indispensably necessary by the Gospel-Covenant, and such as we can't be sav'd without; and in this Respect they exceed all others. But then this Duty is preferable in some Respects,

Ser. III. Speaks, and has Characters of Excellence peculiar to it self. As now, for instance, to represent this matter a little distinctly.

§. 1. In the respect it bears to its *Object*, it has a direct respect to God; and so has every other part of Worship; but it respects him under a higher Consideration, and in nobler Instances. He is to be consider'd as the proper Object of Praise; *i. e.* with respect to the most glorious Perfections of his Nature, and the most excellent Displays of himself: other Dutys and Graces respect him in lower Instances, and in a more confin'd Sense. So Prayer respects his All-sufficiency, that he can supply all my Wants; Repentance, his Mercy, that he is inclin'd to forgive; Faith, his Power and Word, that he is able and dispos'd to deliver and save, &c.

But Praise respects God, as he is in himself, in all the shining Perfections of his Nature, and in all his wonderful Works; in every Appearance of Love and Power, of Mercy and Judgment to the World.

World. We consider him as the *Set. III.*
most glorious and lovely Being, 
the most adorable Object, and
worthy the highest Veneration. In
a word, 'tis God in his highest Glo-
ry, and under the best Considera-
tions of him, that is the pro-
per Object of Praise.

Thus you shall find he is always
spoken of in the present Case: *We* Ps. LXVI.
sing forth the Honour of his Name; 2.
i. e. the Perfections of his Nature
by which he makes himself known,
and is distinguish'd from every o-
ther Being. We sing Praise to
him according to his excellent Great- Ps. CL. 2.
ness. *Sing Praises to our King, sing* Ps. XLVII.
Praises, for God is the King of all 67.
the Earth. Sing to God, sing Praise, Psal.
extol him that rideth upon the Hea- LXVIII. 4.
vens by his name Jah, and rejoice be-
fore him. And so of his great Ap-
pearances in the World: We sing
of all his *marvellous Works*, and Psal. IX. 1.
praise him according to his *mighty* Ps. CL. 2.
Acts. We *shew forth his Salvation,* Ps. XCVI.
declare his Glory among the Hea- 1, 2.
thens, his Wonders among the Peo-
ple: He is great, and greatly to be
fear'd, above all Gods.

Ser. III. §. 2. With respect to the proper
 Subjects, who are fit and qualify'd
 to perform it. I don't deny but
 a wicked Man may sing the Prai-
 ses of God, and may receive In-
 struction and Admonition by what
 he sings; so all Men are call'd up-
 on to sing to God their *Maker*.
 But 'tis the more proper Duty of
 the *Upright*, and such only can
 reach the full or the principal Ends
 of it: *Rejoice in the Lord, ye Right-*
eous, for Praise is comely for the Up-
right.

Psal. C.

Psal.
XXXIII.
1.

There are some Dutys of Reli-
 gion that are more proper to wic-
 ked Men, and especially design'd
 for their good, such as the worst
 of Men ought to perform, and
 may hope to find Benefit by: as
 Prayer, for pardoning Mercy and
 renewing Grace; hearing the
 Word, for the Conviction of Con-
 science, and Instruction in the
 Truth; Repentance for Sin, &c.
 But now singing the Praises of the
 Lord, in its most direct and natural
 Signification and Use, supposes
 Conversion, and is the more pro-
 per Exercise of a regenerate Soul.
 They

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They are only fit to sing the Prais-
 ses of God, whose Souls are set
 right, and can make melody in
 their Hearts to the Lord; where-
 as the Praises of wicked Men, in
 the most artful Tunes, and with
 the sweetest Voice, is but jar-
 ring Discord, and a grating Noise
 in the Ears of God; like a fine
Lesson play'd upon an Instrument
 unstrung and out of Tune.

Besides, that 'tis the proper Du-
 ty of the best *Circumstances*, and
 the best *Frames* of Mind. Every
 Duty has its special season, and is
 more suitable and proper at one
 time than another: So we *humble*
 our selves under the mighty hand
 of God; we *cry* to the Lord in
 Distress, &c. but now we are es-
 pecially to *sing* the Praises of God
 in the most flourishing and pros-
 perous Condition of Life, and the
 most exalted Frame of Mind: *If Jam. v*
any be merry, let him sing Psalms.
In the time of Prosperity rejoice. Eccl. 1
 'Tis then peculiarly suitable when a ^{14.}
 Man flows with Abundance, and
 lives at Ease; when he has the
 highest Relishes of the Divine Fa-
 vour,

Ser. III. your, and his Heart is warm'd
 with Divine Love, and full of sweet
 Experience.

§. 3. With respect to the *Kind* of the Exercise it self. The Divine Authority enstamps a value upon every Duty; and challenges a distinct regard; but singing the Praises of God is the noblest part of Worship, as 'tis the most *unselfish* and *disinterested* Exercise of the Soul: It has not only the directest respect to God, and that in the highest and most excellent Consideration of him; but it intirely respects him, and is wholly taken up in the Contemplation and Regard of him. 'Tis an Expression of pure Gratitude and Love, the most *generous* Service we perform to God, and carrys in it the liveliest Signatures of a Divine and *God-like* Temper of Mind.

In other Dutys there is a Mixture of *Self* and Interest: Some Necessity urges, some Advantage is propos'd by it. We expect something *from* God in other Services of Worship, in this we offer something *to* him. We make a
 Tender

Tender of our Praise, and seek Ser.]
only his Acceptance: In other things we propose our own good, in this the Glory of God; and of every other Duty this has the most *intire* regard to him.

In a word; to offer Praise to God is the most divine and perfect Action of the Soul, and most eminently *glorifies* him. Ps. L.]

§. 4. With respect to the *Place* where 'tis perform'd. Heaven is a Region of Purity and Glory, the Seat of Perfection and Blessedness: In that State much of our present Work will wholly cease, and all will receive a considerable Change. There are many of the Dutys of Religion, and of the first Rank and Order, that seem calculated to our present State, and have no other use but in this World. Whatsoever supposes our Apostacy from God, or respects our Imperfection and Guilt, will cease to be our Duty, when we come to Heaven and are perfectly recover'd; whatsoever had a Tendency to our Recovery, and is not comprehended under the Duty of Praise.

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III. Praise. We shall rest from the Labour of present Service, and be deliver'd from every Weakness and Defect. Thus Prayer will cease when every Want will be perfectly supply'd, and every Desire fully satisfy'd. We shall not need to attend upon Gospel-Ordinances, the Instruments and Vehicles of the Divine Presence and Grace in the present distant and imperfect State, where we know ~~in~~ part, and see thro a Glass darkly; for we shall then see him as he is, and that which is perfect will be come. Repentance will cease, and all Tears be wip'd away; for there will be no more Sin nor Sorrow for ever. Faith will vanish at the Presence of its Object, and we shall walk by Sight, and not by Faith. Hope will be swallow'd up

Rom. VIII. in Fruition: for Hope that is seen 24.

is not Hope; for what a Man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it? There will be a mighty Alteration in the whole Frame of our present Duty. But now Singing the Praises of God is the Work of Heaven: It will remove with us out of this World.

World, and find Admittance in Ser. III. Glory : Yea Heaven is the proper Seat of Praise, as 'tis of Perfection. The more perfect knowledg of the Glory of God, and fuller Enjoyment of his Love, that render other Means and Dutys needless, and determine their Use, raise this to a higher Perfection, and give it the greater Advantage. The clearer Views of Divine Glory, and the livelier sense of Divine Love, will make our Praise the more in season as well as the more compleat. 'Twill enlarge the Subject of our Song, and raise and exalt our Minds ; and we shall see greater reason, as well as be better capable of singing Hymns of Praise. So that 'tis not only very agreeable to the Heavenly State, but most proper to it : and perhaps we can form no truer Conception of the Work of Heaven than this.

For this reason very probably the Apostle prefers *Love* to *Faith* 1 Cor. and *Hope*, as it has a nearer Alliance and Relation to the future World, and is not limited and confin'd

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Ser. III. their part in the Anthems of the Blessed: They strike up their Voices, and mingle Praises with the Seraphim above. The Praises and Triumphs of God, and of the Redeemer, are handed about from Throne to Throne; and the whole heavenly Region rings aloud with

Rev. XV. *Acclamations of Joy. They sung the Song of Moses, the Servant of the Lord, and the Song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints. 'Tis the Voice of all the*

Rev. XIX. *Heavenly Host: I heard a great Voice of much People in Heaven, saying, Hallelujah, Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his Judgments, for he hath judg'd the great Whore, &c. And tho' these Expressions should be thought to have a more direct, and immediate Reference to the glorious and triumphant State of the Church in this World, and to be a prophetick Description of its best and happiest Circumstance on Earth; it will equally serve the present*

present purpose, and I suppose Ser. III. ought not to exclude a final and ultimate Reference to its perfect and glorify'd State above.

Particularly, the Sight of the *Lamb* of God in the midst of the Throne, with the Marks of his Sufferings and Glory about him, will be ravishing and transporting to a glorify'd Soul: 'Twill inspire his Heart with Flames of divine Love, and fill his Soul with Extasys of heavenly Joy: 'Twill furnish out the noblest Song of Praise, and give the greatest Enlivening and Elevation of Thought. Hence they are represented in their highest Glory, array'd with Light, bearing Palms of Victory in their Hands, and Crowns of Glory upon their Heads, while they sing his Glory, and celebrate his Praise: *They sung a new Song,* Rev. V. 9 *saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and open the Seals, for thou wast slain and hast redeem'd us unto God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred and Tongue, and People and Nation, and made us to our God Kings and Priests. And, Worthy is*
the

Ser. III. the Lamb that was slain, to receive
 ~~~~~ Power and Riches, and Wisdom, and  
 Rev. V. 11. Strength, and Honour, and Glory and  
 Rev. VII. Blessing. So we read of a great  
 9, 10, 11. Multitude, which no Man could num-  
 ber, stood before the Throne and be-  
 fore the Lamb, cloth'd with white  
 Robes and Palms in their Hands,  
 that cry'd with a loud Voice, Salva-  
 tion, &c. and all the Angels stood  
 round about the Throne, and the El-  
 ders, and the four Beasts.

In short, 'tis the proper Im-  
 ployment of the best of Creatures,  
 of the whole Society of the Bles-  
 sed, the general Assembly and  
 Heb. XII. Church of the Firstborn. And  
 23. τὰς ἐκ- methinks there is not a more lively  
 24. γὰς Emblem, or affecting Representa-  
 tion of Heaven on Earth, than an  
 Assembly of worshipping Chris-  
 tians, singing the Praises of God.  
 This is just as they do in Heaven;  
 so are the Angels employ'd above;  
 not in Prayer to God, and mourn-  
 ing for Sin, but in Exercises of  
 Love, and Songs of Praise: So  
 the Poet,

— For

~~—————~~ *For all we know  
Of what the Blessed do Above,  
Is that they Sing, and that they  
Love.*

§. 6. With respect to its *Duration* and *Continuance*. Other Dutys cease, as the Reason of them ceases; but singing Praise will last for ever, and be the Work of a whole Eternity. 'Tis the perpetual Exercise of the Blessed, as the Reason and Ground of it is perpetual; and after the Revolution of numberless Ages, will never decay or grow out of Date. There will be constant and growing occasion of Praise to all Eternity. The Subject of their Song will never be exhausted, and never fail; but the clearer and fuller Displays of Divine Perfection will open new Scenes of Glory, and furnish fresh variety of Matter for eternal Praise.

And their Souls will never be unstrung and out of tune; there will be nothing to disturb their Joys, or interrupt the Harmony  
of

Ser. III. of their Praise. They shall never hang their Harps upon the Willows, or sit disconsolate more. They will wind up the Strings of their sacred Lyre, and raise their Notes to the highest Pitch of Praise: They will sing the *Songs of Sion*, and the *new Song*, with fresh Vigour of Mind, and with perpetual

PL CIV. Youth: *I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live, I will sing Praise to my God while I have any Being.*

33.

I shall close the whole with two *practical* Reflections, that will fitly respect the two parts of this Discourse.

r. How infinitely excellent must God be that is the Object of all our Praise, to whom all our Praise is directed, and who is the subject Matter of them all! Every Psalm of Praise is an Hymn to God, and Display of some or other of his Perfections. The Divine Glory gives the truest Beauty, and the brightest Lustre to every Song of Praise. A naked Relation of Divine Perfection, without the Aids of Eloquence and

and Art, will make a more illustrious Description than the finest Allusions, and the most exquisite Fictions of human Fancy and Wit. It receives a Nobleness and Dignity from its Subject; and abstract it from God, and it presently loses its Perfection and Glory. Ser. III.

Yea, the Divine Glory rises above the loftiest Praise; and we fall vastly short of his just Praise when we soar higher in our Acknowledgments, and are most enlarg'd. The Heathen Poets adorn'd the Praises of their Deities and Heroes with all the Figures of Speech, and Fiction of the Mind, and sometimes with the borrow'd Glories of the true God; but the divine Being far exceeds in great *Reality* the highest Flights and boldest Figures of even *Poetick* Licence and Rage. There are vast Reaches of unknown Perfection beyond the Discovery of an Eye of Sense, or Comprehension of a finite Mind, above all the Songs and Triumphs of Angels and Men.

And how infinitely excellent a Being must he needs be, who is the

Ser. III. Subject of our Songs, and the  
 ~~~~~ Glory of them too; who furnishes Matter of perpetual Praise to all the Saints below, and all the Blessed above, to the *Hallelujahs* of Heaven, and *Hosannahs* of Earth; whose Perfection inspires the Matter of our Song, and the devoutest Affections of Soul; that gives the greatest Glory to every one, and far exceeds them all? Contemplate the Divine Being as the Object of our Praise; adore the Divine Glory that is so illustriously great, that reaches wider than the Earth, rises higher than the Heavens, and shines with a surpassing and perpetual Brightness.

2. With what *Frames* of Soul should we perform this excellent Duty! If the Duty it self be so noble and high, the Frame of our Spirits should not be low and mean: If in so many respects it exceed other Dutys of Religion, how spiritual and rais'd should be the Temper of our Minds?

Keep a Guard upon the *Senses* as well as the Thoughts in singing
 the

the Praises of God, that the Heart Ser. III.
ben't diverted by sensible Pleasure,
or too close Attendance to the
Rules of Art, the Harmony and
Proportion of Numbers, or the
Melody and Sweetness of Sounds.
Let the Soul be rais'd and suitably
mov'd; let the Heart and Voice
join together, and the Affections
keep pace with the Tongue.

If the Heart be absent or out of
tune, 'twill spoil the Musick of the
sweetest Song, and render the soft-
test Voice, like *tinkling Cymbal*
or *sounding Brasses*, inharmonious
and disagreeable in the Ears of
God.

This will be the Work of Hea-
ven; Labour after an heavenly
Frame of Mind: 'Twill be the
Work of a whole Eternity; let us
begin the blessed Exercise now,
and inure our selves beforehand.
Let us so sing the *Psalms of David*
here on Earth, that we may sing
the *Song of Moses*, the Servant of
the Lord, and the *Song of the*
Lamb for ever. *Amen.*

OBJECTIONS *con-*
sider'd against the Duty
of SINGING.

SERMON IV.

PSAL. LXVII. 3, 4:

*Let all the People praise thee, O
God, let all the People praise
thee: O let the Nations be
glad, and sing for Joy.*

I Am to answer the *Objections*
against *Singing* in the *Worship*
of *God*. This is the only
thing that can be thought unplea-
sant in our whole Undertaking;
and 'twere pity to interrupt the
Harmony

Harmony of our Discourses with Ser. IV. the ungrateful Jarrings and Discords of *Controversy* (the most unfutable thing in the World to our present Subject) did not the Difficultys and Scruples of some People require it.

That I may perform what is expected from me, I shall but just mention the Argument in my Text, and then reply to the most *considerable Objections* that are produc'd against this Duty.

In the Verse foregoing the *Psal-* Ver. 2.
mist prays for the Conversion of the *Gentiles*, That God would make *known his way upon Earth*, his *saving Health among all Nations*; then follow the words of my Text, *Let the People praise thee, O God, let all the People praise thee*: intimating, that the knowledg of Salvation would be such an infinite Mercy to the World, as not only to invite, but oblige *all Mankind* to publish and resound the Praises of God. And that we may not be at a loss how this ought to be perform'd, he expresses himself more clearly in the following

Ser. IV. words: *O let the Nations be glad,*
 *and sing for Joy*; i. e. express their

Ver. 4. Praises in joyful Songs and Tri-
 umphs, as the word in the Ori-
 ginal does plainly signify. So
 that to praise God by *Singing* is a
 Practice, not only very *sutable* to
 the State of the Gospel, but a
 Duty now to be perform'd by *all*
People; as being what was not
 only pray'd for, but foretold of
 antient time by the inspir'd Pro-
 phet.

And is it not then strange, that
 a Duty so reasonable and becom-
 ing, so clear and express, so no-
 ble and excellent, so pleasant and
 useful, as appears from the fore-
 going Discourses, should meet with
 opposition from any? When if
 we remain silent, or *hold our Peace*,
 it might be expected (if such a
 thing were possible) that as our
 Luk. XIX. Lord himself speaks, *the Stones*
 40. *would immediately cry out.* And
 had we such a sense of the adora-
 ble Majesty and Perfections of
 God, and those immense Benefits
 he hath bestow'd upon us, as they
 deserve, we should find the Prac-
 tice

tice we are pleading for necessity. Ser. IV.
ry, if it were only for the *Relief*
of our Nature; nay sometimes, for
ought I know, for the *Preserva-*
tion of Life it self: for our Hearts
might be ready to burst, and we
might even die under our Joys,
if in some special Cases we should
not be allow'd giving them vent
in the loftiest Strains, and loudest
Shouts of Thanksgiving and Praise.

But blessed be God, among those
who have formerly oppos'd this
Practice of Singing, there are ma-
ny now convinc'd of its being a
Gospel-Duty; and they who in
this particular dissent from us,
are considerably lessen'd in their
Numbers. This is owing to the
successful Industry of several of
their worthy *Ministers*, whom God
hath rais'd up from among them-
selves, who have strenuously asser-
ted and vindicated this Practice,
and hereby had occasion of giving
proof not only of their Skill in
Argument, but in the *Art* too they
have defended, by those excellent
Composures wherewith One of
them hath oblig'd the Christian
Church.

Mr. Mai-
sters, Mr.
Collins,
Mr. Allen,
Mr. Sten-
nett, Mr.
Piggott,
Mr. Harri-
son,
Mr. Keach.
Mr. Sten-
nett.

Ser. IV. And therefore what hath been perform'd of late years, might have superseded any further Attempt of this kind, were it not that in this Publication there is intended a *more ample and compleat Treatise of Psalmody*, than any we have seen extant; and 'tis fit that in this place we take notice of the Objections that are made against this Duty, in answering of which I shall offer some things that I do not find observ'd by those that have gone before me. And that this Discourse may not exceed in proportion those of my Brethren, it must not be expected I reply to every Objection, only to the most considerable; which if fairly answer'd, the others will fall of course; as when we lop off the main Boughs of a Tree, all the other little Branches and Twigs do fall along with them. I shall dispose them into the following Order, and consider,

I. Those Objections that are level'd against the *Duty of Singing*.

II. Against

II. Against the *Matter* to be sung. Ser. IV.

III. Against the *Persons* to be employ'd. And,

IV. Against the *Manner* of the Performance.

I. They that oppose the Duty, do assert, *It is antiquated with the Ceremonial Law; that now it is needless under the Gospel; that it is without Prescription; and that it is very unsuitable to the present bewildered and afflicted State of the Church.*

§. 1. They represent this Practice *as antiquated*, and object against it *as a part of the Ceremonial Worship under the Law*, which is abolish'd; and they imagine we are now to praise God only by *making secret melody in the Heart*, without any artificial Tunes or Modulation of the Voice.

That which hath led them into this *Mistake*, is the wrong Opinion they have conceiv'd of this Duty, as being *purely Ceremonial*; whereas among the *Jews* it was really of a *mixt* nature, *viz.* partly *Ceremonial*, and partly *Moral*.

Ser. IV. What was Ceremonial refer'd only to the *manner* of Performance under the *Levitical Priesthood*, which was in a very pompous manner, with a variety of musical Instruments, and Persons, who as Officers or Masters in Musick, did direct and preside in the management of it. This, I am of Opinion, did die and was bury'd with the *Jewish Ceremonys*; but the Practice of *Singing* still remains as a part of *natural Religion*, and is of standing and univereal Obligation: This, if duly consider'd, wou'd I hope remove the Difficultys about this Duty. The use of musical Instruments, &c. was only a *ceremonial* Appendage or external Solemnity, and of it self no *rational* part of Worship; but to *sing* forth the Praises of God with our Lips is of a different nature, and falls under another Consideration. And tho the *Jewish* manner of performing this Duty be now ceas'd, it does not follow that therefore there must be no *Singing* at all; or that because the *Harp* and *Cymbal* are laid aside, our

our *Mouths* must be seal'd up too. Ser. IV. None can be ignorant how strenuously the Apostle *Paul* does plead for the *abolishing* of the *Jewish* Ceremonys, and particularly in the second Chapter of his Epistle to the *Colossians*; and yet in the very next Chapter he *recommends* to them the Practice of *singing Psalms*, which certainly he would never have done were this to have been rank'd among the number of the former. His exhorting them to do this with *Col. III. Grace in their Hearts*, and to make *16. melody in their Hearts to the Lord, Eph. V. 19.* does no way forbid vocal Singing; any more than because it was their Duty also to pray with the Heart, they ought not to use their Voice in Prayer. It is evident this was only to direct them in Singing, that while they were employ'd in the outward Duty, they should take care it be with a suitable Disposition of Spirit, both being put together, *Singing and making melody in the Heart.*

To conclude, it should methinks tend to reconcile Persons to this Practice;

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Ser. IV. Practice, that we plead for no more than what is *necessary* to the decent and lively discharge of a Duty which is written with the Pen of Nature upon Mens Hearts; letting all other pompous Observances remain where our Saviour and his Apostles left them: and if Singing in the Worship of God be a part of natural Religion, it answers

§. 2. The next Objection against it *as a needless thing*: For what can be more necessary than that which our Reason dictates to be a piece of Homage, indispensibly due from Creatures to their Maker and Benefactor? To say that praising of God by Singing is needless or superfluous, because it *may be done as well by Prayer*, is a mistake; which may be evinc'd from the nature of the thing, as well as experience. Besides, we are not to take the Measures of our Duty from what *we* judg proper or needful, but from the *Will* and

* Eph. V. *Command* of Christ *. It would
 19. Col. be, I confess, an expeditious way
 III. 16. to shrink Religion into a meagre
 Jam. V. 83. Skeleton,

Skeleton, a thin Shadow, if we Ser. IV
were oblig'd to do no more than
what our corrupt and self-indulgent Nature should think necessary. Might we not then argue as strongly against the Lord's Supper? Can you not think of his dying Love when you pray or hear the Word preach'd? What need of going to the Table? But as this is an Ordinance, own'd to be instituted on purpose for the commemorating of Christ's Death and Sufferings; so why may not singing of Psalms be a distinct Ordinance, appointed for the celebrating in an especial manner the Praises of God? And can we be so disingenuous as to refuse exalting the Name of God in any way that is possible and lawful for us, who in such numberless ways hath been infinitely merciful and gracious to us?

§. 3. 'Tis objected that this is a Practice *without New Testament Prescription*; and would you have us sing without warrant from Christ? To make good this Objection, they endeavour to enervate

the

Ser. IV. the force of those Passages we produce from the New Testament for the establishing our Practice.

Marth.
XXVI. 30.
*ἠμῶν αἰ-
νῶν.*

As to that which mentions our Saviour's *singing an Hymn with the Disciples*, they would make us believe the original word imports no more than simple giving of Thanks, without Singing; but all who understand *Greek*, and will be impartial, must confess that the word does in its primary and proper sense signify such a praising of God as is perform'd by Singing. To cite Authoritys can be of no use to the *Unlearn'd*, and to those who are conversant in this Tongue it is notorious; besides, the sense of this word is so fully clear'd in some late Treatises, that I shall refer you to them*, where you have the Judgment of *Austin*, *Constantine*, *Suidas*, *Calvin*, *Béza*, and our Countrymen *Ainsworth*, *Leigh*, and many more that might be added. But it may suffice to

* *Singing of Psalms vindicated from the Charge of Novelty*, printed by Mr. Parkhurst. *Mr. Allen's Essay*, and the Vindication of it.

convince the unskilful Reader of Ser. IV. the sense of the word *Hymn* (which is but an abbreviation of the Greek word ὕμνος, or *Hymnos*) that *learned Men*, by common Consent, have adopted it into the *English* Language to signify a grave Song of Praise. To conclude, we have reason to acquiesce in this sense of the word, inasmuch as it is generally acknowledg'd our Saviour did actually *sing* after his last Supper*, according to the custom of the *Jews*, who in the Paschal Night, after they had eaten the Lamb, did use to sing some of *David's* Psalms; which solemn Hymns they call the great *Hallel*, and which began at *Psal.* CXIII. and ended with *Psal.* CXVIII. Hence therefore the word ὕμνος must imply more than bare giving of Thanks, viz. such a giving of Thanks as hath Singing conjoin'd with it.

To those Places in *St. Paul's* Epistles which we alledg for this

* See Lightfoot, Patrick, Jurieu, Whistler, &c.

Ser. IV. Duty, they say the Apostle requires *speaking* only, and *teaching* and *admonishing* one another. They can't deny they are further directed to *sing*, and to *make melody*: but they evade this, by telling us, it is confin'd wholly to the Heart; *singing with Grace in your Hearts, so singing and making melody in your Hearts to the Lord*: and that these Expressions have no respect at all to *vocal Singing*. This we deny, and say, that those who dissent from us must acknowledg these Actions of *speaking, teaching and admonishing*, do undeniably imply the use of the *Voice*. This being granted, the *Nature* of the things, in which we are to use our Voice, do sufficiently determine the *manner* of doing it, viz. by *Singing*; the Duty requir'd being such as was to be perform'd in *Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs*, which all who are impartial and ingenuous must own were compos'd and form'd for *Singing*. But the Apostle says, *Singing with Grace in your Hearts, and making melody in your Hearts*: 'Tis granted,

ted, and no doubt 'tis a great Duty to do so; but then this was not to exclude singing with the Voice, but only to caution us that we rest not in the *external part* of the Duty. But how can we *teach* and *admonish* one another in Singing? I reply, it would be no wrong done to the Text, if we say that the word *causes*, *one another*, may be rendred [*your selves*] for so our Translators have rendred the same word, *Eph. V. 19.* And indeed while we are singing, we have a special Opportunity and Help to instruct and admonish *our own Souls*; as that by dilating the Sound, and prolonging the Voice, there is more time given for the fixing our Hearts upon that which is sung with more delightful Meditation. But as I do not deny the word may be and is translated *to one another*, so how our *mutual* Instruction and Edification is promoted in the practice of Singing, is plainly and fully set forth already by him who from this Text hath open'd the nature of the Duty. Thus I have with brevity
vindi-

Ser. IV. vindicated the *principal Places* of the New Testament, that are produc'd for this Duty of Singing, from the Exceptions that are brought against them. There are some other Scriptures which will fall in our way to be spoken to in their proper Places.

§. 4. The last Objection against Singing in the Worship of God is, That it is *unsuitable to the present bewildred and afflicted State of the Church.*

There is so little in this, that there needs not much to be spoken to it: Besides, I do not find it urg'd in the Writings of our *modern* Opposers, who seem to have dropt it, as being conscious, I suppose, of the Weakness of it. The Church's Afflictions are so far from being an Objection, that I think them rather an Argument for the performance of this Duty; and *because* she is in a bewildred State, she has the greater need of something to recreate and refresh her, which might be like giving

Prov. XXXI. 6. *of Wine to him that is of a heavy Heart.* And it is worthy our notice,

tice, that many of the Psalms are Ser. IV.
wonderfully suited to the lowest Condition and most afflicted State of the Church, plainly enough signifying the end of their Composure, and when we ought to make use of them. And we do not find the *Jews*, tho often brought into a very low and bewildred Condition, did upon this account desist from this part of religious Worship. We read indeed that when they were under the *Babylonish Captivity*, they hung *their Harps* *Psalm upon the Willows*; but the following words give us reason to believe this was upon a very *singular* occasion, *viz.* when their *Enemies* did *insult* over them, and by way of *Scorn* did require them to entertain 'em with some of their Musick, and let 'em hear one of those Songs which were wont to be sung in the Temple: otherwise 'tis more than probable they did now and then refresh themselves with this Divine Musick, and for this, when led into Captivity, they carry'd their Harps along with them from *Jerusalem*, or procur'd

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Ser. IV. cur'd those Instruments in *Babylon*, tho now upon the insulting and barbarous usage of their Enemies they laid them aside *. Much more might be said in answer to this Objection, but I have spent too much time upon it already. I come

* Jam. V.
13. is con-
sider'd al-
ready in
Serm. II.

II. To the second Class of Objections, viz. such as are level'd against the *Matter of the Duty*. Those mention'd are against the *Act* of Singing; these against the *Matter* that is usually sung in our publick Assemblies, viz. the Psalms of *David*, *Asaph* and others. Here it is objected, That the *Matter of them frequently does not suite our Case*: That there are many *Passages we cannot sing with Truth, nor others with Charity*; and furthermore, to use these in the *Worship of God is to introduce a Form, and to stint and limit the Gifts of the Spirit*.

Before I reply to these Objections, I shall give you a brief Account of our Opinion concerning the Matter to be sung in publick Worship. And,

1. Tho

1. Tho we approve and shall Ser. IV.
presently vindicate the Practice of
our Churches in singing *David's*
Psalms, yet we are not against o-
ther Composures. However,

2. What of *this kind* may be al-
low'd to be sung, we should ad-
vise the *Matter* of them to be
collected from the *Holy Scriptures*;
a turning of which into *Metre*,
with diligent regard ought to be had
to the *Text*, and the *Sense* at least
to be carefully retain'd: and it
may not be amiss that we here
caution against too great a liberty
to the flights of a *Poetical Fancy*,
lest by being too *profuse*, it de-
tract from the *Sense* and *Beauty* of
the *Scriptures*, which always ap-
pear *best* in their own naked *Sim-
plicity*.

3. We do not this out of any
mean; irreverent and unbecoming
Thoughts of *David's Psalms*, or
that we would discard these from
having their part in the Worship
of God; but that adding others
to them, we may still have a *ful-
ler Set* of *Psalms*, and a more *abun-
dant variety* of *Spiritual Songs* to
promote

Ser. IV. promote and further the celebrating of God's Praises in the Christian Church; and these being for the *Matter* of them collected from the *Scriptures*, there is no *Addition* made to the Word of God hereby, as many will be ready otherwise to object.

Having thus given our Opinion about the *Matter to be sung*, I shall now consider the Objections that are made against the use of *David's Psalms*, and give you in a narrow Compass the *Heads* only of those Replies which may be made unto them, referring the Reader to such Authors as insist more largely upon them.

§. I. 'Tis objected, That the *Matter of these Psalms does not correspond to the present Case and Occasions of God's People, as more Evangelical Composures would do.*

To this we shall only say, if it be impartially consider'd, we shall find a *great many at least* of the *Psalms* very well adapted to the Case and Circumstances both of the Church in general, and each particular Member of it; and provided

vided there be due care taken of a Ser. IV.
 wise and prudent choice of the *Psalm* to be sung (which is ordina-
 rily done in our Assemblies) I think it will very much abate the force of this Objection. And even where the Matter is not so *sutable* to the present Case, yet it having been the *Case of others*, we may find Profit in our *Meditations* upon it, by learning *Instruction*, and being *admonish'd* and *exhorted* to our Duty from it; and this the Apostle represents as one main end of singing *Psalms*, and *Hymns*, and *spiritual Songs*.

§. 2. 'Tis objected there are many *Passages in David's Psalms* we cannot sing with Truth, nor others with Charity.

What is hinted under the foregoing Objection might serve to answer this, viz. if we cannot express them as our *own Case*, we may meet with *Instruction*, *Conviction*, *Counsel* and *Comfort* from them; and to sing the *Case of others*, with this view, is no more *lying to God* (as some pretend) than *reading* the same *Passages* with
 the

Objections consider'd against
V. the like view. As to those which
they say we cannot sing with Cha-
rity, such as are *Imprecations* and
Curses upon wicked Men; whereas
the Gospel teaches us to wish Evil
to no Man, but to desire the Good
of All; I shall only say, that we
are not to wish the Judgments and
Curses of God upon any as En-
emys to our private Persons and
Interests; however (tho the Im-
precations in David's Psalms were
immediate *Inspirations*, and per-
haps often *Predictions* that are not
to be drawn into Example) yet
so far as it appears Men are impla-
cable Enemys to Christ and his
Kingdom, we may imprecate the
Judgments of God upon them.
But granting these Passages were
unfutable to an *Evangelical Spirit*,
yet a good Improvement may be
made of them in our Meditations,
as has been already suggested.

§. 3. 'Tis further objected, that
the use of Scripture-Psalms will
introduce a Form, and so sing by a
prelimited and prestinted Form is to
lay a Restraint upon the Spirit of God.

This

This is no Restraint when the Ser. IV.
 Duty cannot be *otherwise* perform'd. 
 To urge this Objection is to say,
 that either we must *not sing at all*,
 or that what is sung be as to the
 Matter of it *immediately indited*,
 or an *extempore* Effusion: For if
 we must not sing by a *Scripture-*
Form, neither ought we to sing by
 a form of *human Composure*. And
 if the Matter to be sung must be
immediately indited, then either
 there can be but one sing at a
 time; or if every one be allow'd,
 then it must be by the other's pen-
 ning or reciting what is in his
 Mind, and so it becomes a *Form*
 to all the rest. There is no way
 then of Singing left, but to sup-
 pose every Person to have the
 Gift of immediate composing;
 but then should these sing all to-
 gether, what Disorder and Con-
 fusion may we imagine it must
 produce in the Church? For we
 cannot suppose (as not having any
 Instance of it) that every one
 should have the same Thoughts,
 express the same Words and Num-
 bers too, and sing in the same

Ser. IV. Tune at the same time. From whence it follows, that either there must be no Singing at all in the Church; or if it be done to Edification, it must be by a *Form*, the *Nature* of the Duty being such as to require it. The Case of Singing is not the same with that of Prayer: for Prayer may be perform'd without a Form, there being but one Person who is the mouth of all the rest; but Singing cannot, because there every one is to use his own Mouth: And therefore it is no stinting of the Spirit to do that by a Form, which cannot be otherwise done without a *Miracle*. And thus I have answer'd those Objections that are level'd against the Matter of the Duty. We proceed,

III. To those that are produc'd against the Persons to be employ'd in this Duty of Singing. If Singing in the Worship of God may be allow'd, some will tell us, *That according to Primitive Practice but one Person ought to perform this Office in the Church: Others are for*
 excluding

excluding Women from the benefit of Ser. IV. this Ordinance. But the last Objection, and which carries the greatest plausibleness with it, is against promiscuous Singing; that is, the concurrence of Good and Bad together in this Work: For wicked Men, they think, cannot sing God's Praises, and good People ought not to do it in their Company. I shall reply to what is objected under these Particulars.

§. 1. That one only as the Mouth ought to sing, and the rest to concur with their silent Consent; as in Prayer the Minister is the Mouth, and the rest join with their secret Amen. The ground they have for this Objection must be Scripture-Evidence, or Primitive Practice. To begin with the latter, I do not find they have any thing from Primitive Practice (after the ceasing of extraordinary Gifts) that gives them the least Countenance. A learned * Author tells* Inquiry us, "That the Manner of the
" Primitive Singing was such as ^{into the}
" the People bore a part in it: ^{Constitut.}
^{and Worship}
And ^{of the Pri}
Origin gives us this account of ^{mitive}
it, Church.

Ser. IV. it, " That it was ἑμμελῶς καὶ συμφῶνως,

De Ora-
tione.

" in good Tune and Concert; i. e. the People singing with their Voices all together. *Pliny* the younger tells us, " That in his time Christians us'd to meet together before day, *Carmen Christo dicere secum invicem.* Some quote this Passage to prove Antiphonal Singing, and tell you the words are to be thus rendred, " They sung an Hymn by course, or one against another; tho doubtless they are here more truly rendred, They sung a Hymn one with another, or among themselves: and they who understand the Genius of the Latin Tongue will allow it.

Introduct. And the learned Dr. *Cave* does to *Lives* of thus translate that Passage. But *Prim. Fa-* this is not the Matter here in *thers. See* dispute; be this how it will, it is *Discourse of* most plain from hence, that the *Cathedral* People bore a part in this Work of *Worship.* Singing, and that it was not committed only to the performance of one Person. I shall say no more, but recommend to those who have an inclination to consult further about this Matter, the perusal of a

little

little anonymous Treatise lately Ser. IV
publish'd, and entitled, *Singing of*
Psalms vindicated from the charge of
Novelty. You see then there is
no foundation for this Objection
in Primitive Practice.

If there be any force in it, 'tis
from Scripture-Evidence, and the
chief they produce is in those
words of the Apostle: *How is it* 1 Cor.
then, Brethren? when ye come toge- XIV. 26.
ther, every one of you hath a Psalm,
hath a Doctrine, hath a Tongue, &c.
i. e. as Beza observes, one hath a
Psalm, another hath a Doctrine,
another hath a Tongue; not that
every one had all these. Now,
says the Apostle, let all things be
done unto edifying. He speaks here
of the extraordinary Gifts of the
Spirit: To one was given the
Gift of Tongues, to another the
Gift of Prophecy, to another
the Gift of composing Psalms by
the afflation of the Spirit, as Dr.
Hammond observes upon the place;
now let all things be done unto edi-
fying. And how must this be?
why not that all should exercise
these Gifts at the same time, but

Ser. IV. one after another, as you may see  in the 31st Verse; *Ye may all prophesy, says the Apostle, one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.* He directs them to do it *one by one*, that is, one at a time; so he that had the Gift of Psalmody, he alone must sing for that time. And it being an extraordinary Gift confin'd to that Person, it requir'd this extraordinary way of performing it, and cou'd not be otherwise. The Inference which those that dissent from us draw from hence, is this, *That only one Person ought to sing in the Church, and the rest, as in Prayer, to join with their secret Consent.*

The Answer which may be given to this is, I think, very easy and plain; for tho it be granted the Apostle speaks here of the extraordinary Gift of Psalmody, which some had in the times of the Apostle (And this seems to be one way of Propheying, and a method which in those times the Holy Ghost did use to instruct and edify the People; and therefore when there were any, who

were

were thus directed to exercise Ser. II
their Gift, the People ought to give their attendance to it) yet we challenge any Persons to prove that the Christian Church had *no other way* of singing Psalms than this. We do assert the contrary, and that besides this extraordinary Gift, it was the Practice of the Church to sing *all together*, or with consent of Voices. That this was their *more ordinary* and *stated way* of worshipping God, there are Examples already given of it by him who hath undertaken to prove the Duty. Besides, the *Gentile Church*, in thus singing the Praises of God, does but fulfil the *Prophecy* in my Text, and many others that are mention'd of her in the Old Testament. The exercise therefore of an extraordinary Gift, as it is no proof that the Church had *no other way* of singing the Praises of God; so *that* being now *ceas'd*, is much less an Argument against our present Practice; nay is rather an *Argument* to confirm it.

Ser. IV. §. 2. Another Objection is rais'd
 against Womens Singing.

As to this I do not find they have any thing to support it from *antient Practice*: For if we consult Antiquity, we shall find Women were permitted to sing in the Church as well as Men. Of Women singing in the Primitive Church, we find *Tertullian* *, *Socrates*, *Theodoret*, and others make mention. That which our Opposers harp upon are those Places of the Apostle, 1 Cor. XIV. 34. and 1 Tim. II. 11. where he enjoineth *Silence to Women*, and that they be not permitted to speak or teach in the Churches. But to any who consult those Passages, and the Scope of the Apostle, it will appear his words are to be confin'd only to the Womens usurping an *Authority to prophesy*, and become *publick Instructors* in the Church. This upon many Ac-

* Quantam autem castigationem merebuntur illæ, quæ inter Psalmos, vel in quacunque Dei mentione, resectæ perseverant? L. de Virgin. vel. 16.

counts would be very indecent; Ser. IV. and therefore in such a capacity, and in this way, he would not *suffer a Woman to speak, but to be in Silence*: Nay, if it were only to ask a Question, in order to be resolv'd, he would not have them propound it publickly, but to ask their Husbands at home: *For it is a shame* (says he) *for Women to speak in the Church*; i. e. to propound any thing publickly before the Assembly, either out of pretence to inform others, or tho it were only to be inform'd themselves. It will be evident to any who consult these Places, that the Apostle confines himself to this: And therefore here is nothing that should debar Women from bearing a part in Psalmody, and joining with the Church in *praising God* by singing, it being *no Act of Authority*, and the Reason of it *common*. Besides, it being, as I mention'd before, a part of natural Religion, Women are to reckon themselves oblig'd to the performance of it, who have as many Considerations to induce and

Ser. IV.  engage them as the Men. And next to praying in secret, and instructing their Children and young Ones at home, I know not in what they can so well imploy this noble and glorious Instrument the Tongue, than in singing the Praises of God in his Church. And whether this may not be one, if not a *principal* Reason, why God, in his adorable Wisdom, has distinguish'd by its pleasant Softness the Voice of the Woman from that of the Man, to temper the Sound, and render it more sweet and melodious when they are join'd together in singing his Praises, is what I have thought not altogether unworthy of our Consideration. It has therefore, I must confess, been with some Concern and Offence that I have observ'd many Women sitting in the publick Assembly, as having nothing to do when the Praises of God have been sung by others. They have taken no part in this heavenly Exercise, as tho it were not allow'd them; or if it be, they had no Inclination or Heart
unto

unto it. I wish such as have in-Ser. IV
dulg'd themselves in this culpa-
ble Omission would henceforwards
reform. But,

§. 3. The last Objection I think
worth mentioning at present is
against *promiscuous Singing*, the
Concurrence of Good and Bad in
this Work : *For wicked Men, they
think, cannot sing the Praises of God,
and good People ought not to do it in
their Company.*

In answer to this we readily
confess, that no People have so
much Cause, or have their Hearts
so well qualify'd to sing the Praises
of God as devout and holy Souls :
Further, that the wicked or unre-
generate cannot sing, nor indeed
perform *any other Duty* as they
ought : They cannot *make Melody
to the Lord*, as the Apostle directs,
by *singing with Grace in their Hearts*.
All this is readily granted, but
what will our Opposers infer from
hence? That therefore ungracious
Persons ought not to ingage in
this Duty? Or that good People
ought to refrain from this part of
the Worship of God, while they
are

Ser. IV. are present? I think neither. If the Reason be conclusive in this, it should be acknowledg'd so in a parallel Case: If unregenerate Persons may not praise God, neither ought they to pray to him (nor indeed perform any Act of religious Worship) for ungracious Prayer is as unacceptable to God as ungracious Psalmody, and the same may be said of other Dutys.

But we answer further, that Mens unfitness for Duty does not disannul their Obligation to the performance of it. It is their Duty to pray to God, and to praise him, this is of natural and necessary Obligation: And being their Duty, they ought to perform it with Grace in their Hearts: That they do not is their Sin, but then wholly to omit it would be a greater Sin: The one is Hypocrisy, the other Atheism.

Again, tho it be true that wicked People cannot praise God for those things which the Regenerate can, nor what they do of this kind can they do it in such a manner; yet they have many things

things to adore and bless God for, Ser. IV.
as the Excellencys of his Nature,
his wonderful Perfections, mani-
fested and display'd in the Works
of Creation and Providence. They
have many temporal Blessings, Pre-
servations and Deliverances, and
which yet lead to higher ones, to
praise him for. They ought to
bless him for the Mercys of his
common Bounty, when they can-
not praise him for the Blessings of
his special Grace. Hence there-
fore we find there is a general
Command upon all Men to sing
and give Thanks unto the Lord:

Sing unto the Lord all the Earth. So, Ps. XCVI.

Make a joyful Noise all ye Lands. 1.

And, *Sing unto God ye Kingdoms of* Ps. C. 1, 2.
the Earth. And it hath been well Ps. LXVIII
32.

observ'd upon the CVIth Psalm,

That Travellers, Prisoners, sick

People, Seamen being fav'd from

several Distresses, they are all of

them commanded to praise the

Lord for his Goodness, and to de- Read from
v. 6, to 37.

clare his Wonders before the Sons of

Men.

And as the Unregenerate may
thus have many things to praise

God

Objections consider'd against

God for, so they are capable of retaining some sense of these Mercys upon their Hearts, and by the Advantage of *common Grace* are capable of making *some Returns* of Gratitude for the same; tho' what they do of this kind falls short of saying Sincerity.

After all, they are capable of receiving Instruction, Admonition, and Counsel, from singing the Praises of God; which, as I have said, is one great End of this Duty.

It being so then, that an indispensable Command is laid upon All, that nothing can disannul the Obligation, that the worst of Men have many Mercys to praise God for; that they are capable of retaining some Sense of these Mercys, and making some Returns of Gratitude, and of being admonish'd in the Performance of this Duty: Upon all these accounts they ought not to be depriv'd of the Privilege of singing the Praises of God.

That which concerns the other part of the Objection, *That good Men ought not to do it in their Company,*

pany, is no better than mere Ca-Ser. IV.
 vil: For the foregoing part of the 
 Objection being answer'd, this
 must fall to the ground of course.
 For if unregenerate Men *may*,
 and it is their *Duty*, to sing the
 Praises of God; it is doubtless no
 sin in good Men to join with them
 in it, or to do it where they are
 present. How unfit soever the
 one are for the discharge of their
Duty, it need not unfit nor ought
 it to hinder the other from per-
 forming theirs. That will never
 be imputed to us as our Sin,
 which it was not in our power to
 help or mend. If Hypocrites and
 wicked Men do join with us in
 Singing, we do not therefore join
 with them in their Sin. If they
 pretend to sing the Praises of God,
 but do it not with Grace in their
 Hearts, we cannot help that; and
 their Sin does not infect or pollute
 us. If they be not what they
 profess, 'tis not our Profession is
 false (so be our Hearts are right)
 but theirs that is so. *Unto the* Titus I. 15.
Pure all things are pure, but unto
them that are defil'd and unbelieving,
 nothing

Ser. IV. *nothing is pure.* By which it is plain, that what's impure to them that are defil'd, is not made impure to them that are pure.

And thus I have answer'd the Objections that are offer'd under this Head, which relates to the Persons to be concern'd in this Gospel-Duty of Psalmody. I come to the

IVth and last Head of Objections, which concerns *the Manner of Singing.* And here several Queries are us'd to be put; as, *Is it lawful to sing in Metre?* So, *What Warrant have we to sing with artificial Tunes?* *May we sing without reading?* *Is Antiphonal Singing lawful?* or, *May we sing with musical Instruments?*

As to the two former of these Objections, viz. *Singing in Metre, and artificial Tunes*; there is so little in them, that I shall say no more, than that it is as lawful to turn the Psalms, or other fit matter for spiritual Songs, into Metre, in order to be sung, as it is to translate the Scriptures into

English

English Prose to be read; and being Ser. IV. the aptest method to fit them for singing, there is no doubt to be made of the Lawfulness of it. As to the Use of our Tunes, they being compos'd in such Numbers as do very well sute the Gravity of the Matter to be sung, I see not any thing that hath any force against it. More need not be said to this Objection.

As to the two last Querys, *Whether Antiphonal Singing, and Singing with muscal Instruments be lawful?* I leave them to defend their own Cause, who are for this way of celebrating the Praises of God. We reckon our selves no farther concern'd in this Controversy, than vindicating our way, as it is us'd in our Congregations; and therefore I dismisse that part of it which concerns *Cathedral Worship, See Disc.* and singing with *Organs, to those of Cathed.* who being better satisfy'd with *Worship.* that Practice, may be better able to defend it.

There remains only one thing we are concern'd to plead for, and this is a Practice which hath lately

Ser. IV. lately obtain'd in some of our
 Congregations; and that is *singing*
of Psalms without reading.

This has been matter of Scruple to some People. To remove an old Custom, tho a bad one, is like removing the antient Landmarks. But if People did duly inquire into the first Reason of this Custom, they who are such Sticklers for it (if I am not mistaken) would not express such a Zeal for its continuance. This Practice was at first owing to the Ignorance of People, who living under the Darkness of Popery, vast multitudes of them could not read. For this reason our first *Reformers* thought it much better to practise this way of singing Psalms, by the Clérk's reading Line after Line, than that such great numbers (as then were) should be depriv'd of the Benefit of this Ordinance. But blessed be God, it is now a long time since we came out of Popery: And there are but few among us but can read, or who (if they would be at the pains) might soon
attain

attain it. And therefore I think Ser. IV
'tis high time to reform from a Custom, which the People's Ignorance did at first necessitate them to, and which all who will use their Understanding must acknowledg. does labour with many Inconveniences and Defects.

For the way of Singing by Reading does in the *first* place cause a very great *interruption* in the Musick; and thereby retrenching from the Sweetness and Harmony of the Action, makes the Exercise abundantly more flat and dull than otherwise: This every one's Experience must inform them.

Again, it is a very great hindrance to the *understanding* of what we sing. For the reading of the Line does frequently break the Sense, and till that be given whole: and intire, we know not what we sing, but are left to uncertain Conjectures; and before the whole Sense be read out, we have frequently forgotten what we first sang. And as thus the Musick and Sense of the Psalm is and must oftentimes be interrupted, so likewise

Ser. IV. *French and Dutch Churches, where*

~~~~~ I have often seen Persons who had no Books join as readily in singing as those that had them. By frequent reading of the Psalms, they have so transcrib'd them into their Memorys, as at last to lay aside their Books. And O how excellent a Treasure would it be, to have a good number of divine and spiritual Songs repositied in our Memorys, ready to produce and use upon any occasion! that when we are by our selves, or with others, we can presently raise up our Hearts, and sing a Psalm and Hymn to the Lord.

Now after what has been said I may leave it to the Impartial and Unprejudic'd to judg which is the most eligible way of Singing; and most adapted to answer the Design of the Ordinance, the other Practice, or that which is here recommended.

I know but one Objection, that is of any consideration, to be alledg'd against it: And it is, that this Custom must necessarily debar those from the Benefit of this  
Odi-

Ordinance, who cannot read. Ser. IV.

But *first*, these are but *few*, especially in *London*, and other *Cities* and *Towns*, where there are abundant Opportunities, and ordinarily care taken to instruct the Poor to read. And of these the far greatest part in a very short time might learn to read, if they would but apply themselves to it. It is generally People's Sin they cannot read, and why should others suffer for their Sin?

Again, If for the sake of two or three in a Congregation we ought to omit a Custom so beneficial to the *Generality*, and so *necessary* to the *right Performance* of this Duty: For the same reason we ought *wholly to omit* Singing, for the benefit of a *greater number*, who for want of a Voice *cannot* sing with the Congregation; but who may say, it would be much more profitable to them, if the Psalm were *gravely and slowly read*, than if it were sung.

But lastly, where the Number of such illiterate Persons is considerable, as in some remote, obscure,

Ser. IV. *scure*, and Country Villages, it may not be amiss to continue the other way; but so as that now and then, for the sake of others who can read, our Method be observ'd. And in the mean time it were to be wish'd, that such as are charitably dispos'd would order some part of their Benevolence towards the erecting of Schools in such dark places, and procure that the Poor be taught to read. Herein they would doubtless do a Work highly acceptable in the sight of God.

As to other Objections, that may be rais'd against what we have recommended; a Pair of *Spectacles* would answer for the *most part* those of the Aged; for I am satisfy'd but very few attend our Assemblies, who have outliv'd the Use of these Helps: And a small Sum of Money rais'd in the Congregation to buy a competent number of Books to be given away, will answer the Objections of the *Poor*.

But if after all this, People will cavil and be contentious, we must  
 pity

pity their Weakness, and bless Ser. IV.  
God who hath shone upon us with  
so great Light, as to remove our  
*most dangerous* Prejudices against the  
*pure Administrations* of his Wor-  
ship; when we see how difficult it  
is in lesser matters to wean Peo-  
ple from a Custom they have been  
long wedded to.

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H D I R E C -

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DIRECTIONS *for the*  
*Duty of* SINGING.

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SERMON V.

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EPHES. V. *latter Part of*  
*the 19th Verse.*

— *Singing and making melody*  
*in your Heart to the Lord.*

THESE Words contain an Exhortation to the Practice of that noble and delightful Duty, of *Singing* the Praises of God ; and afford us some Advice and Direction for the right Performance of it. We must be inspir'd and acted, not by a *vain* and *sensual Spirit*, but by the *divine* ; and being thus prepar'd, must

must so sing, as to *make melody in our Hearts to the Lord.* Ser. V.

Here are several Words in this Verse relating to the Nature of this Duty, which I shall not stay to explain and open: This having been already done to my hand, I shall no further consider the Text, than it is serviceable to me in handling that part of the Subject, which is assign'd me in this Exercise; and that is to lay before you *some Practical Rules and Directions for the acceptable Performance of the Duty.* The Nature of it has been open'd, your Obligation as Christians to perform it fully prov'd, the Divine Excellency and Nobleness of it clearly manifested, the Cavils and Objections of those who are Enemies to it fully consider'd and answer'd; and now, I hope, what you have heard has so far convinc'd your Judgment, and influenc'd your Wills and Affections, that you are resolv'd either to *begin or continue in the Practice of so unquestionable and excellent a Duty,* and that you are very desirous to know how you may per-

Ser. V. form it to God's acceptance, and  
 ~~~~~ the advantage of your own Souls.

This *Part of the Subject* is as necessary as any, for you to be instructed in; for after all that has been said, if you fail in the right manner of Performance, your labour will be lost: How excellent a Duty soever it be in it self, and how beneficial and pleasant soever it be to others, it will not be so to you; but God will be dishonour'd, and your Souls prejudic'd. I fear multitudes are very defective and faulty in this part of the Duty: There are many more who are Enemies to a *holy Performance*, than who are Enemies to the *external Duty*.

I shall divide the Directions into three parts,

- I. *Such as concern the Choice of proper and futable Matter.*
- II. *Such as relate to the external Manner of Performance. And,*
- III. *Such as respect the internal and spiritual Frame and Temper of the Soul.*

I. 'Tis necessary something should be said on the first Head, because in the Choice of a Psalm, the *Metre* into which it is translated, and the Tune to which it is set, is too often more regarded, than the subject *Matter* of it, and its *Suitableness* to the present occasion.

§. 1. *We should ordinarily chuse such Matter as is best suited to the Spirituality of the Gospel-Dispensation we live under.* As now, for instance, such parts of *David's Psalms* should generally be sung, as give us the most great and worthy, the most sweet and endearing Apprehensions of the blessed and glorious God, and which tend to enkindle and stir up in us spiritual Affections, suitable to those Apprehensions.

Such Psalms as contain Matter of Prayer for divine and spiritual Blessings, and of Praise for the Reception of them. Such which hold forth precious Promises of the same nature, for our Faith and Hope to build upon. Such as

Ser. V. greater Brightness and Lustre under the *New*. *Now as Believers*, in those days, were most taken up in celebrating those *Dispensations* of God's Providence, that were then most *remarkable*; so should Christians be in celebrating the *Work of Redemption*, this being the most glorious Discovery of the Divine Perfections which God *has* given, or *can* give to *this* World.

I am far from confining our Praises and Thanksgivings to this Duty of Singing. These should mix themselves with all our Prayers and

Phil IV. 6. Supplications: *In every thing by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God.* But, since the Singing and Chanting forth God's Praises has an *Advantage* above the bare Rehearsal of them in Prose; since this tends most to quicken and enlarge the Heart, and creates most spiritual Pleasure in the Soul; we should, in this way, offer to God those Praises and Thanksgivings which have the Mysterys and Blessings of our Redemption for the Subject-matter of them.

Upon

Upon this occasion I cannot Ser. V,
but heartily wish, that many Parts
of the *New Testament* were trans-
lated into Metre, and so fitted to
be sung in Christian Churches and
Families, and that the Practice did
more generally obtain among us:
Not to the Exclusion of *David's*
Psalms, but only as a Supplement
and Addition, because they don't
so fully sute the State of the Gos-
pel-Church, as they did the *Jewish*.
This Part of our Christian Wor-
ship would be much more com-
pleat and perfect, if those Doxo-
logys and Benedictions were thus
translated, that we meet with in
St. Paul's Epistles, and other Parts
of the New Testament. We read
That the four Beasts and the four
and twenty Elders did praise Christ
by singing a new Song, saying, Thou
art worthy, &c. Many *Expositors*,
by these *Elders*, understand (not
improbably) the Members of the
Christian Church upon *Earth*; and
then the words are an intimation,
that in Christian Assemblys Christ
is to be prais'd with *New Songs*,
futed to the Work of Redemption,

Rev. V. 8,
9.

Ser. V. and the Glory he is advanc'd to, and not merely with the *Psalms of David*. If you desire further Satisfaction, I refer you to Mr. *Warr's* ingenious Essay on this Subject, which I have seen since the Composition of this Discourse.

§. 2. *Upon publick spiritual Occasions we ought to have regard to those Providences of God that his Church and People are then under.* As we are a part of Christ's Church, so we ought to be affected with the State thereof. When God's People lie under or are in danger of any general Calamity, and we are call'd to publick Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer, such *Psalms* should be chosen, as bring to our remembrance the Circumstances of God's Church in former days. His wonderful Appearances for them, when their Strength and Hope was almost quite gone, the Methods they took in their Distress, and the Success of them, and what Returns they made to God for their Deliverances; the meditating upon, and singing forth such Passages, have an Aptitude and Tendency

dency to beget in us awful Apprehensions of the Majesty and Power, Justice and Holiness of God; and they will greatly help to quicken and strengthen our Faith and Hope in his Grace and Goodness, since he is the same God *yesterday, to day, and for ever*, and has the same Love and Compassion for his People as ever.

Again, *such Psalms* are proper as are of a Penitential Nature, which contain *Confessions* of Sin, *Deprecations* of deserv'd Judgments, *Supplications* for undeserv'd Mercys; which are futable to beget and stir up Self-abhorrance, Shame and Sorrow for, Hatred and Detestation of Sin.

And then on days of publick Praise and Thanksgiving, such Psalms should be chosen, as do set forth and magnify those Perfections of God, which were most conspicuous in the Mercys we commemorate, and which are the most apt to excite those Graces that should be exercised in the most lively manner on those days, and such as will be best expressive of our Resolution, to

trust

Ser. V. trust and confide in God for the future. I forbear mentioning particular Psalms, that having been largely done in some of the foregoing Discourses. A *Christian*, who is conversant in *David's Psalms*, will find there are few Providences God's Church can be under, but there is something in them very futable and applicable ; and a wise Choice would be very serviceable to bring the Minds of Christians into, and to keep them in a good Frame, throughout the Dutys of such Days.

§. 3. In our Choice some regard should be had to the other Parts of Worship this Duty is conjoin'd with. We must so endeavour to perform every Duty, that one may be a Preparatory to another, and that the subsequent Duty may further cherish and strengthen those holy Impressions and Affections in us which the foregoing began : that tho we pass from one Duty to another, yet that which is the main end and design of all Dutys, viz. the glorifying of God, and the working up our Souls to a Divine and Godlike

Godlike Temper, may still be car-Ser. V.
 rying on more and more. *When* 
Singing precedes Prayer, something
 should be sung that may best com-
 pose the Mind to a becoming Re-
 verence for that Duty; and when
 it follows *Preaching*, something
 should be chosen that may be pro-
 per to second and further press
 home the Truths we have heard.
 When there is this *blessed Harmony*
 between one Duty and another,
 we shall perform them with the
 greatest Pleasure and Profit. I
 dare appeal to the Experience of
 serious Christians, whether they
 have not found the singing *the self-*
same Psalm much more sweet and
 reviving to their Spirits *at one*
time, when this Direction has
 been observ'd, than *at another*,
 when no regard has been had to
 it. *Again, on Sacrament-days*, when
 we have been commemorating the
 matchless Love of our dear Re-
 deemer, at the close of that Or-
 dinance something should be sung
 that may keep alive, and further
 excite those Graces we have been
 in the Exercise of, and that may
 send

DIRECTIONS for.

1. send us away full of Admiration,
Joy and Thankfulness.

§. 4. *Christians in their private Family should have regard to their Family-State and Circumstances, and those particular Providences of God they are under, especially when they are peculiar and remarkable, either in a way of Judgment or Mercy. A suitable Choice at such times will improve the Seriousness of our Frame, and make the Dispensations more affecting and impressive. But care must be taken that our Joy or Sorrow don't degenerate into sinful Extremes, that under the Notion of Duty we do not cherish such a Temper of Soul as is really dishonourable to God, and injurious to our selves, and which ought to be striven against.*

§. 5. *Lastly, Private Christians may regard the particular State and present Frame of their own Souls. Tho' it be unquestionably lawful to sing such Psalms as don't exactly suite our own Circumstances, either outward or inward, because they are profitable for Instruction and*
Adma-

Admonition; yet we shall be most affected when what we sing is suited to our Condition, and is expressive of the inward Sense and Language of our Hearts. Those sing with the most Pleasure, that sing *David's Psalms with David's Spirit*. In short, Christians should consider what special Graces they have more than ordinary need to have exercis'd and increas'd, what Corruptions to be mortify'd and kept under, what Difficultys, and Temptations, and Afflictions they are call'd to contend and grapple with. Such things as these must direct them both in the matter of their *Prayers* and *Singing*, when the choice is left to themselves. So much for the *first General Head*. I now proceed in the second Place,

II. *To such Directions as relate to the external manner of Performance*. I don't pretend to instruct you in the Art of Singing, 'tis not my proper Business was I capable of it; I shall only mention a few things that Reason and the Nature of the Duty plainly suggest.

Ser. V. §. 1. *Some Regard ought to be had*
 *to external Harmony, that there be*
 Melody made with our *Voices* as
 well as *Hearts*. If no care be taken
 about the Tune and Metre, there
 will be nothing but Discord and
 Confusion ; such Singing will be a
 great *Hindrance*, and not a *Help*
 to Devotion. We are *Sensitive* as
 well as *Rational* Creatures, com-
 pounded of Body and Soul ; and
 while we are in this state of U-
 nion, our Senses have great Influ-
 ence upon our higher Powers.
 Sensitive Pleasure is lawful and
 laudable, while it is desir'd in sub-
 ordination and subserviency to
 that which is more refin'd and
 rational, and not principally for
 it self. Without the one it is scarce
 possible, in our present State, to
 enjoy the other, for God works
 upon his Creatures in a way su-
 table to their Nature. The inno-
 cent Pleasures of the Ear, by me-
 lodious Sounds, has experimentally
 been found a mighty help to
 excite and raise devout Affections
 in the Soul : *Nature* (as one ex-
 presses it) *in this case helps Grace* :

But

But here our great Care must be, Ser. V.
that we don't take up with the 
Means for the *End*, and mistake
the pleasing of our sensitive Affec-
tions and Imaginations for that
spiritual Pleasure which holy Souls
take in God and Things of a Di-
vine Nature. Whenever it is
thus, the fault is in the evil Frame
and Temper of our Hearts, and
does not arise from the Nature of
the thing; for holy Souls can and
will improve it for holy Ends and
Purposes. And indeed unless Sing-
ing be so order'd, as in some mea-
sure to be grateful to the Ear, the
Ordinance will be expos'd to Con-
tempt, and not serve the Ends of
Devotion. *God is the God of Or-
der, and not of Confusion.* I would
not be thought to discourage those
from this Duty who have little or
no artificial Skill; many can sing
in conjunction with others, tho
they can't *lead* a Tune: and they
that have not so much Skill as
this, may so manage their Voices,
as not to disturb those that have,
and by joining with them may be
greatly affected and edify'd, much
more

 Ser. V. more perhaps than those that have ten times their Skill, but want their pious Dispositions of Soul. Tho still I am of Opinion, that if such Christians have a natural Capacity for it, some *artificial Skill* would be very serviceable to them, in the more spiritual Performance of the Duty: provided they are not so taken up with minding the Tune, as to be taken off from observing the Matter sung, and the Frame of Heart with which they sing.

§. 2. *Care must be taken that the Tunes sung, and the Manner of Singing be only such as have a Tendency to excite divine and spiritual Affections.* Psalm-Tunes ought to be solemn, and grave, not vain, and light, and airy, as if they were only adapted to please and gratify a wanton and sensual Mind: This would be to turn one of the most noble and spiritual Dutys of Religion into a mere *Entertainment* for the Senses and Fancys of carnal Men; this would be to turn God's House into a *Theatre*, and would in a manner desecrate God's *sacred* Worship,

Worship, and make it distastful to Ser. V.
pious Minds. The Power of *Vocal* as well as *Instrumental Musick* is very great, and may be abus'd to bad Purposes as well as improv'd to holy ones ; and therefore only such Tunes must be us'd in God's House, as becomes his Majesty and Holiness, and the Gravity and Spirituality of the Worship we are engag'd in. *Neither* must the Voice be so modulated, as should render what is sung unintelligible to the greatest part of the Worshippers ; for this would be, as to the Ends of *Edification*, the same thing as if Persons sung in an unknown Tongue.

§ 3. *In the choite of the Tune, some regard should be had to the Matter sung ;* that it may have an Aptitude to excite in us those Divine Graces, which the Matter of the Psalm requires and calls for. Nothing is more certain than that different Tunes have a different Influence and Efficacy upon the Minds of Men : Those that have a Tendency to raise our Joy and Thankfulness, are Enemy's to Sor-

Ser. V. row and Sadness of Spirit; and those that befriend this Temper, are prejudicial to the other. It would be very preposterous, and a great Incongruity, if the *Tendency* of the Tune should promote Sorrow and Grief, when the *Design* of the Psalm is to raise in us a joyful thankful Admiration of God's Grace and Goodness.

§. 4. *Such Tunes should be ordinarily sung, as the Generality of the Worshippers can join in; because Singing is a Duty incumbent upon all Christians that have any capacity for it, and is a stated Part of God's publick Worship: and therefore it is not rightly perform'd when it is so manag'd as to shut out the greatest part of the Assembly from having any share in it. I may add,*

§. 5. *That it is most eligible, that Persons, engag'd in this Ordinance of Singing, should have Psalm-Books, that so the Duty might be perform'd without the usual Interruption of reading Line by Line. By this means the Sense of what is sung will at once lie open to their View,*

the Duty of SINGING.

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View, and be better understood by Ser: V. them; and there will be a more intire and continu'd Harmony, and the Affections will not be in so much danger of cooling and flatting by the frequent Pauses that are made by reading. These things are but barely mention'd, having been more distinctly treated of before. But yet I subjoin, that the Inconveniency of Reading is such as may be lawfully dispens'd with, where it cannot be remedy'd without a greater; i. e. when without this Help the greatest part of an Assembly would be debar'd from joining in the Ordinance. Need I add,

§. 6. *And lastly, That in the Performance of this Duty there must be all the external and visible Signs of Reverence and Devotion. Where these are wanting, we may, without breach of Charity, conclude, that there is not much inward Seriousness and Affection. Tho bodily Exercise alone profits little, yet God must be glorify'd with our Bodys as well as our Souls; they are the Workmanship of God, and the*

Pur-

Ser. V. Purchase of Christ, and the Temple of the Holy Ghost : The Lord is for the Body, and therefore the Body ought to be for the Lord. In this Duty the Head must be uncover'd, the Countenance compos'd and serious, the Eye fixt, not roving and wandering; and, in a word, the whole external Behaviour such as, in the judgment of Charity, bespeaks an engag'd and devout Mind and Heart, and as becomes the Perfections of the God we worship. And whether that Posture in Singing, which generally obtains among us, be so proper for Psalms of direct Prayer and Praise, I leave to your own serious deliberate Consideration. I now proceed,

III. To such Directions as respect the internal and spiritual Frame and Temper of the Soul. Tho you are ever so careful in observing and following what I have hitherto said, yet unless a special regard be had to the State and Frame of the Soul, all will avail nothing as to your Acceptance with God. Some
of

of these Directions are such as Ser. V. concern this Duty in common with others, and therefore I need not much enlarge.

§. I. *The habitual Temper and Disposition must be such as is pleasing unto God.* You must be in a converted, pardon'd, reconcil'd State. Till you have Grace in the Heart, and are fill'd with the Spirit, you are not qualify'd for the acceptable Performance of this Duty. The Exercise of Grace necessarily supposes the internal vital Principle; for Persons can never exercise that which they have not. Carnal and un sanctify'd Men do but debase and pollute every Duty they take in hand: Their State is unacceptable; the Principles from which, and the Ends for which they act, are not divine and supernatural, but low, base and mercenary; and consequently nothing that they do is properly pleasing unto God. *The carnal Mind is Enmity against Rom. VIII. God; it is not subject to the Law of 7, 8. God, nor indeed can be: So then, they that are in the Flesh, cannot please God. We are only accepted Eph. I. 6. in*

Ser. V. *in the Beloved*, to whom they have
 ~~~~~ no vital Union, nor stand in any  
 Gen. IV. 4. federal Relation. The *Lord had*  
*first Respect to Abel, and then to his*  
*Offering.* If the *Person* be not ac-  
 cepted, the *Sacrifice* will not. I  
 own all the Actions of Men in a  
 justify'd State are not acceptable  
 to God, for they do not always  
 exert the good Principles that are  
 within them, and act becoming  
 their Relation and Character; and  
 yet till the *Tree be made good, the*  
 Mat. VII. 17, 18. *Fruit can never be truly so.* Wic-  
 ked Men may have pleasant and  
 melodious Voices, and may be well  
 skill'd in the *Art* of Singing, and  
 so may be instrumental in raising  
 the Affections of pious Christians;  
 but not being animated by a Di-  
 vine Spirit, they are but like so  
 many *dead and lifeless Organs*: for  
 want of that which ought to be  
 in them, they lose not only the  
 spiritual benefit of the Duty, but  
 are obnoxious to Punishment for  
 their Hypocrisy and Dissimula-  
 tion, for making only an external  
 shew of that which they really  
 have not. I design not by this  
 Discourse

*the Duty of SINGING.* 169

Discourse to take unconverted Men Ser. V. §  
 wholly off from this Duty: for the same Objections that lie against their *Singing of Psalms* for want of habitual Grace, lie against their *Praying*, and *Hearing*, and any other Duty; for no Duty can rightly be perform'd without the Grace of God. I would only convince them of the Misery and Unhappiness of their present Condition, that they may not contentedly continue in it: Their moral Incapacity for Duty takes not away their Obligation to Performance, but is their Sin; and the greater it is, the more deprav'd it speaks them to be. However, if they do their best, with those Influences of common Grace that are afforded, and do honestly desire and endeavour to do better, they are much less guilty than they would be by a total Omission.

§. 2. *You must sing with Attention and Understanding.* This was the the Apostle's Resolution: *I will* 1 Cor. *sing with Understanding.* *Sing ye* XIV. 14. *Praises with Understanding.* It's *PSXLVII*  
 impossible that blind Devotion<sup>r</sup>.

I

should

Ser. V. should ever be pleasing unto God. Tho there may be *Light* in the *Head*, when there is no *Heat* and *Warmth* in the *Heart*, yet we can never be rationally and piously affected with what we understand not; such Devotion can be no better than superstitious Frenzy and Enthusiasm. Our great Care then must be, that we are not so taken up in our Thoughts about the Tune we sing, and the Sound and Cadency of the Words, as not to mind the Excellency, Weight and Importance of the Matter sung. This is a common fault, that ought diligently to be guarded against. I fear Mens Thoughts are often imploy'd in observing how they themselves and others sing, when they should attend to and be intent upon the spiritual and useful Nature of what they sing: Persons can never receive Instruction or Consolation by such kind of Singing. See then, that while your *Tongues* are imploy'd in chanting forth the words, your *Mind* and *Thoughts* be as busily imploy'd in diving into, and

in sweet Meditation upon the spiritual Sense and Meaning of them. Unless you have *lothful* and *un-  
ingag'd* Minds, you will find the Duty of Singing a greater help this way, than barely the reading of the words would be, there being a longer time for the exercise of Thought in the *one* than in the *other*.

§. 3. *Yea, there must be melody in the Heart as well as the Voice:* This particularly is the Apostle's Direction in my Text. If you ask what this denotes, I answer in two or three things.

(1.) That the Heart and spiritual Affections be *ingag'd* in the Duty, as well as the Mind and Voice. It is very possible the Mind may be employ'd, and yet there may be no devout stirring of the Affections. It is one thing to know and mind what is said and sung, and another to be deeply and seriously affected with it. When this Duty is acceptably perform'd, there is a happy conjunction of all these; *Grace in the Heart* will exert and put forth it self. The

Ser. V. Apostle, in his Epistle to the Colossians, explains what he means

Col. III. here by *making melody in our Hearts*,  
16. by telling us we must *sing with*

*Grace in our Hearts*. Renewing Grace is very diffusive, it reaches to all the Powers and Facultys of the Soul; we must be *sanctify'd wholly in Soul, Spirit, and Body*. But yet the Heart is the principal Seat and Subject of Divine Grace; this is what God chiefly looks at, and calls for: *My Son, give me thy Heart*. We must *sanctify the Lord God in our Hearts, make him our Fear and our Dread*. Those *Notions* of God, how sublime soever, which do not distil upon and influence the Heart; and those external *Actions*, which do not flow from a Heart set right with, and duly affected towards God, are of no account with him. And as Grace has its Throne and Residence in the Heart, so it must rule and govern there in a lively and vigorous manner; it must fix and ingage, warm and inflame the Heart. Our Hearts must burn within us; for no external Dutys

of Religion are pleasing to God, Ser. V. unless we are in the exercise of Grace in the performance of them.

(2.) *This Melody denotes the variety of Divine Graces that ought to be exercis'd in this Duty.* One Note makes no Melody. This is a Duty wherein the several Graces of the Spirit may and should be exercis'd; such as *Faith* and *Love*, *Desire* and *Hope*, *Humility*, *Joy* and *Delight*. And indeed I know no one particular Grace, but what there may be occasion for in this Duty one time or other.

(3.) *It denotes the futable Exercise of Grace.* Every Grace should be drawn forth in its due and proper Order, according as the Matter sung shall require. The Exercise of one Grace must not exclude the Exercise of another. As in *vocal Musick*, every Note must be sung in its proper Place and Order, and there must be a skilful mixture of them, or there will be no *external Melody*; so there must be a sweet mixture of every Grace, and a seasonable act-

Ser. V. ing of them upon God, or else  
 there will be no *Melody in the Heart*. It is a great part of holy Christian Wisdom, to know how to live in the futable Exercise of Grace, and not to be acting one Grace, when God by his Word or Providence calls for another. It is a great fault in some serious Christians, that they too much indulge themselves in Fear, Sorrow, Grief, &c. whilst they neglect or seldom stir up the nobler Graces of Faith, Love, and Hope, and Delight in God; tho' these latter may be more futable and congruous to their present Circumstances, and the Dutys they are engag'd in. There is no true *Melody in the Heart*, when Persons are so defective and preposterous in the Exercise of Grace. We must take care then, that every *Psalm we sing* do stir up those Graces, which in the Design of God, and the Nature of the Thing, it has an Aptitude and Tendency to do.

When there is an Assembly of such Hearts, thus tun'd and im-  
 ploy'd

ploy'd in singing the Praises of Ser. V. God, they make *Melody to the Lord*: This is much more grateful to God, than the exactest and sweetest *Melody* of Voice can be to us. It's a real Pleasure to the Blessed God to see such a Union and Conjunction of Hearts, all animated by one and the same Spirit, breathing forth the same Desires, paying the same Divine Worship and Adoration, all swallow'd up in the Contemplation and Admiration of his infinite Excellencies and Perfections. If our *praising Assemblies* were but made up of such Worshipers, they would be a true Emblem of the *Heavenly Choir* and Society above: but it is greatly to be fear'd, that in most of them, there is much less *Melody in the Hearts* of Men than in their *Voices*; many who have harmonious Voices, have Hearts that will not stir nor move within them. Let every one of you look to your own Hearts, that this *Melody* be not wanting there; and then you shall be accepted of God, tho you sing in Society with

Ser. V. those who are Strangers to it.

Now that you may be always ready thus to sing, I'll just sub-join a few words of Advice.

*You must labour to be of an humble, thankful Temper of Soul, and make Praise and Thanksgiving your constant Employment; this should have a more considerable share in your daily Devotions than ordinarily it has. Take heed of a querelous, murmuring, complaining Spirit; for this greatly indisposes the Soul for the Work of Praise. Endeavour to live from day to day in a sense of God's Love to you, and in the exercise of Love, Joy, and Delight towards him. Just before your Entrance upon this Duty, your Thoughts should be taken up in meditating upon God's Excellencys and Perfections, your own Meanness and Unworthiness, his Goodness to you above multitudes of your Fellow-Creatures, your many Mercys and Privileges, notwithstanding your Demerits and manifold Forfeitures of them. Think upon God's astonishing Love to Sinners in Christ,*  
and

---

*the Duty of SINGING.* 17

and the blessed Fruits and Effects Ser. 1  
of it. *Think* on the Joys of Hea-  
ven, and the noble Employment  
of Saints and Angels there; how  
they tune their Hearts, and with  
how strong a Breath they sound  
forth the Praises of God, and of  
the Lamb. *Think* of the Torments  
of the Damn'd, and how happy  
they would reckon themselves if  
they were call'd to your Work;  
and how justly you might have  
been in their State and Place, who  
instead of praising God, are weep-  
ing, and wailing, and gnashing their  
Teeth. Such Meditations as these  
would be very serviceable towards  
the putting you in a suitable Frame  
for, and assisting you in the Per-  
formance of this Duty.

§. 4. *There must be a humble de-  
pendance upon the Spirit of Christ,  
for his assisting, quickening Influences.*  
Without these, tho the Principles  
of Grace are implanted in the  
Heart, they will not exert and  
put forth themselves. Believers  
themselves without Christ can do no-  
thing: 'Tis thro Christ's strengthening Joh.XV  
us; that we are enabled to do all

**Ser. V.** *things: He works all our Works in us, and for us. We must go forth in his Strength, and make mention of his Name, and of his only. As without God's general Concourse, as the God of Nature, we can't perform natural Actions; so without his Influence, as the God of Grace, we can't perform spiritual ones. The best of Christians have need to put up the Prayer of the*

**Cant. IV.** *Spouse: Awake, O North Wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out; then let my Beloved come into his Garden, and eat his pleasant Fruits. The giving or withholding of the Spirit's Influences is one great cause of the remarkable difference that there is betwixt one Christian and another, and betwixt the same Christian, at different times, in the Performance of religious Dutys. In this way God does signally either reward the Diligence, humble Dependance, and Expectation of his People; or punish their Carelessness and Sloth, their Pride and Self-Confidence.*

**VIII.** *Tho the Spirit of Christ dwells in every*

## *the Duty of SINGING.*

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every sincere Believer, yet there is a vast *Variety* and *Inequality* as to the Measure of his actual Assistance and Influence; and in proportion hereto the Hearts of God's People will be more or less enlarg'd and carry'd out in the Duty. The Spirit may justly reckon himself neglected and slighted; when there is not a deep and serious sense of our own Insufficiency, and a humble Dependance upon, and Expectation of Help and Assistance from him.

§. 5. *There must be an actual Reliance upon the Merit and Intercession of Christ for our Acceptance.* After the Injunction of this Duty in *Colossians*, 'tis immediately added; *Whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the Name of our Lord Jesus* Ch. III. 16  
giving Thanks to God and the Father by him. 17.  
The best Christians bring much Guilt and Pollution into the Presence of God with them; they contract much while they are before him; their Graces and Duties are so defective and imperfect, that if God should be exact to mark Iniquity, they could not stand before him.

Set. V. him: If there was not Forgiveness  
 with him, there would be no Incou-  
 PL CXXX  
 3. 4. ragement to fear or worship him.

Our highest Praises are infinitely  
 beneath the Excellencys and Per-  
 fections of the Divine Nature, and  
 unworthy of the Divine Accep-  
 tance, consider'd merely as they  
 flow from us. Christ is that An-  
 gel spoken of in the Revelations,  
 Ch. VIII. who stands at God's Altar, and has  
 3. a golden Censor full of Incense,  
 which he offers, with the Prayers and  
 Praises of all the Saints, upon the  
 golden Altar which is before the  
 Throne. We must be great Stran-  
 gers to God and our selves, to the  
 just and righteous Demands of his  
 Laws, and the Imperfection of our  
 Dutys, if we are not sensible of  
 the necessity of Christ's Mediation,  
 to recommend our Persons and  
 Services to the Divine Acceptance.  
 And therefore we ought to exert  
 explicite Acts of Faith upon his  
 Satisfaction and Intercession; for  
 we cannot justly expect the Appli-  
 cation of his Merits, when there is  
 no Sense of the need of them, nor  
 any actual Reliance upon them.

*the Duty of SINGING.* 181

§. 6. And lastly, *This Duty must* Ser. V.  
*be perform'd. unto the Lord; so run* ~~~~~  
the words of the Text, *Singing*  
*and making Melody in your Hearts*  
*to the Lord.* It is not material,  
whether by (Lord) we here under-  
stand God the Father, or the Me-  
diator Jesus Christ; since in every  
Duty Christ is to be ey'd as the  
*proximate* immediate Object, and  
God the Father as the *final* ulti-  
mate one. *There is no Coming to* Joh. XI  
*the Father but by Christ;* and we 6.  
come to Christ, that by him we  
may be brought to God. God in  
Christ then is the Object to whom  
this Duty must be perform'd. We  
must sing in obedience to the  
*Command* of this Lord; do it as an  
*Act of Divine Worship*, which is  
due to him, and him only; with  
a *Design* to magnify and advance  
his Honour and Glory, by thus  
proclaiming his Perfections, our  
Esteem and Affection for them,  
and Trust and Confidence in them.  
We must in this way *recommend*  
him as an Object worthy of the  
Homage and Worship of the whole  
World. *These, together with our*  
*order,*

Ser. V. *own, and others spiritual Edification and Comfort*, ought to be the Ends we should propose to our selves in the Performance of this Duty: not any low, mercenary, selfish ones of our own, *such as worldly Advantage, the Ostentation of our own Art and Skill, the Gratification of the Ears and Fancys of others*, that we may be applauded by them. Nay, *mere Improvement in the Art of Singing* ought not to be our principal Design, tho it may be subordinately look'd at in the Performance of so religious a Duty. This would be not to sing to the Lord, but to our selves; instead of obtaining his Acceptance, we should certainly provoke his Displeasure, and merit his Rejection and Abhorrence of us and our Sacrifices.

Thus I have gone thro the *three General Heads* I propos'd: And now, upon the Whole, you may easily see, whence it is that many *complain*, they find so little *Pleasure in, and Benefit by this Ordinance*; their Esteem and Value  
for

for it lessens, and they are tempted to live in the neglect of it. Ser. V

There has certainly been some failure in the manner of Performance in some of the foremention'd Respects, which they ought to be sensible of, and humbled for, and charge upon themselves: To this they should attribute their Unprofitableness, and not to any want of Aptitude and Fitness in the Ordinance to do them good. Let but Persons constantly and conscientiously observe the Rules I have laid down, and I am confident they will quickly find this as quickning, and edifying, and comforting a Duty, as most of the Dutys of the Gospel.

*And as for those of you that have a Value for this Ordinance,* I would have you take care to follow these Directions, as ever you would reap spiritual Advantage your selves, keep up the Credit of it in the World, and promote the Practice of it among others.

But

Ser. V. prov'd and cultivated by *You*:  
 ~~~~~ and, I hope, our joint Endeavors  
 may do something toward the settling its Theory and Divine Regulation, its more decent and orderly Practice, the reviving its ~~more~~ general Use, retrieving its Glory, rescuing it from the Objections of the Scrupulous, and from the Corruptions of Levity or Superstition.

To this end the *Nature of the Duty* has been stated, that you may sing with *Understanding*. Its *Obligations* prov'd; that you may sing without the fear of *Idol-worship*, or offering *strange Fire*. The *Excellence* of it has been display'd, as truly Angelical and Seraphic; as pleasing to God, and comely for the Upright; as that whereby we are carry'd into the Company of Angels, to join in their Work, and partake of their Joys. *Objections* have been answer'd, that your Hearts may be fix'd while you sing and give Praise. The true manner of singing the Divine Praises has been directed, so as to make *Melody to God*, and that it may be acceptable

ceptable to him, and profitable Ser. VI.
to us. 

What remains then, but that we make the *most* of such a Duty as this? And since here's nothing else to hinder, Indifference, Drowsiness or Carelessness should not; but that we awaken all our Powers to a Work that is so much its own immediate Reward. And since the foregoing Sermons have presented you with the *Scale* of Heavenly Musick, as found in Scripture set by the *Holy Ghost*, who in all this Matter is the *chief Musician*; practise upon it as high as you can: and tho at present the lower Notes only are within your Compass, hereafter the higher Strains shall not be beyond your reach: for when we are made *like Angels*, we shall sing like them too in that World where Love and Harmony are in Perfection: In the mean time, we may bear an humble Part. And why should we think our Heaven can begin too soon? If the Grace of Heaven do but tune the Heart, Wonder, Love and Joy will never let your Tongue
lie

Ser. VI. lie still, but will awaken *your Glory,*
 and all that is within you to bless his
Holy Name.

The former Part of this Psalm recounts the many Calamitys *David* was under, his Circumstances dark and gloomy as the *Cave* he was now in; distress'd and besieg'd on every side, no way open to Relief but that toward Heaven; he was flying before *Saul's* Cruelty, now instigated by that *evil Spirit*; which in the absence of *David's* Harp and Psalmody, had taken intire possession of him. The *Sweet Singer of Israel* was thus drove out to join Confort with the untaught Harmony of the Woods, wandering like a Vagabond, and had nothing fix'd but his Heart, and that he was resolv'd should never be remov'd from God, or from his Praise; for even in such a time as this he could say, *My Heart is fix'd, O God! my Heart is fix'd; I will sing and give Praise. Fix'd in the midst of Agitations, serene within when all around was Storm and Tempest. And how Divinely Great does that Man look,*
whose

whose inward Harmony no Jar Ser. VI
and Discord of all his outward Affairs can shatter and destroy? Who knows the Secret of fetching down his Consolation from Heaven, and making every thing contribute to his gradual Ascent thither? *David* in these straits not only quiet, but joyous! under these Depressions, and yet will not hang his Harp upon the Willows! If this be the Fruit of being accusom'd to sing the Divine Praises, may we all be *Psalmists*, may we all say, *Awake up my Glory, &c.*

It will sufficiently answer my purpose to take notice of the Terms he uses, and then to press the Exhortation.

I. *Of the Terms he uses.*

§. 1. *My Glory.*

That is, my Soul (say some) because the Spirit of a Man is the Glory of a Man, whereby he is dignify'd and rais'd so much beyond the Brutes, as to be, but a little lower than the Angels, nay akin to God himself, the Father of Spirits.

My

Ser. VI. brought them into the *World*. It

is not my business here to dispute this matter; and he must at any time do it but sorrily, whose Inclination is against him all the while, and whose Genius tempts him to wish himself solidly confuted in all he can advance. But since I find these *Instruments* in my Text, and since the *Sound* of such Texts as these is made use of to turn the publick Worship so frequently into Consorts of Musick; I shall leave 'em with this Remark: That to let them alone, especially in publick Worship, tho' one thought them tolerable, has a much better Grace with it, than to declare them *forely displeasing to God, and that they filthily defile his holy House and Place of Prayer* †, and

gulam Ecclesiasticam composuit, & Cantum ordinavit, adhibitis Consonantiis (ut quidam volunt) Organis. *Platina in Vit. Pont.*

† *Homily of the Time and Place of Prayer*, 2d Part. The Homily relates that a Woman should say to her Neighbour, at the Time of the Reformation; Alas, Gospel, what shall we do at Church, since all the Saints are taken

and yet to bring them into his Ser. VI.
holy House and Place of Prayer, 
for the use of all promiscuously,
who will sing in the Assembly,
whether they think 'em so much as
tolerable or no.

§. 3. *I my self will awake early.*

And without this all the rest
had been an empty Sound: There
would have been no Melody to the
Lord, whatsoever good Musick he
might have made to himself. He
would not put God off with a Sa-
crifice of mere Air. He summons
the Attendance of all his Powers.
Himself is the Offering; and his
Musick plays to the Sacrifice, as
it goes up in holy Affections and
spiritual Joys: and unless *these* ac-

taken away, since all the goodly Sights we
were wont to have are gone, since we can-
not hear the *Piping, Singing, Chaunting, and*
Playing upon the Organs, that we could be-
fore. But, Dearly Beloved, we ought greatly
to rejoice, and give God thanks, that our
Churches are deliver'd out of all those things,
which displeas'd God so sore, and filthily
defil'd his holy House, and his Place of
Prayer; for the which he hath justly destroy'd
many Nations, &c.

K

company

Ser. VI. company the Song, the mere
 ~~~~~ Breath of an Organ, or the Trem-  
 blings of the Strings of an Harp,  
 is as good Devotion, and less of-  
 fensive to God.

II. *To press this Excitation, to  
 which David in these Words  
 awakens and stirs up himself.  
 Consider,*

S. 1. *By the precedent Discourses  
 it's apparent God expects it from you,  
 and insists upon it.*

Where the Precepts are so po-  
 sitive, and the Directions so care-  
 fully laid down, it can never be  
 thought he has left you at liberty.  
 Supposing your Obligation clear  
 to you, a wilful Neglect here is  
 not reconcilable to that Sincerity  
 that has respect to all God's Com-  
 mands. Praise is the proper Tri-  
 bute due to God, the Eternal  
 King; and where it is not paid,  
 we have Instances that God has  
 distrain'd for it upon the best of  
 Men, who indeed do always owe  
 the most. All Hezekiah's Good-  
 ness in other respects could not

2 Chron.  
 XXXII.  
 25.

protest.

\*

protect him under the Neglect of Ser. VI. *rendering to God according to the Benefits he had receiv'd.* And to say that this *rendering to the Lord* may be done *other ways*, besides singing his Praises, is true; but does no more satisfy the Authority which has appointed also *this way*, than the doing of some Dutys will atone for the Neglect of others: as if because a Man acknowledg'd God by *Hearing*, he need not do it by *Prayer*, &c.

§. 2. *You cannot answer the Neglect to Gratitude, any more than to Obedience.*

It's fit the Benefactor should chuse his own way of being acknowledg'd; and he has particularly told us, that *he that offereth Praise glorifies him.* The Motives to it are infinite, and the Ingratitude must be monstrous, where the Obligations are so many. Does he not *daily load us with his Benefits*, and *crown the Year with his Loving-kindness*? And his tender Mercys over us, do they not keep pace with, nay, out-number our Pulse and our Moments? Think

Ser. VI. How glorious he is in himself, as  
 well as how beneficent to us; and  
 that he places so much of *his Glory*  
 in his Goodness to us, and it must  
 awake *your Glory* in Praises to  
 him.

Exod.  
 XXXIII.  
 18, &c.

For whom did he raise the noble Architecture of this World, where your Eyes cannot look off from a Miracle? The Earth so situated and furnish'd, as to be full of the Goodness of God, so is also the great and wide Sea. But God needed not the Cattel of the thousand Hills of the one, nor the Fish of the other. For whom did he so furnish the Heavens over our heads? He that inhabited Eternity, needed neither Times, nor Seasons: But he knew how much we needed the useful Variation of Summer and Winter, Light and Darkness.

Can we behold the Sun, Moon, and Stars, their artful Order, the exact Periods of their Motion, their Brightness and Influence, and not strike in with David upon a like Survey, *How excellent is thy Name, O Lord? 'Tis thy Glory*  
 has

Ps. VIII. 2.

has gilded their Beams; thy Skill Ser. 1  
has fix'd their Orbs. Not to give  
God the Glory due unto this part  
of his Name, looks like a Combina-  
tion with the Enemy of his  
Honour to defeat the Design of  
the whole Creation, which is to  
*declare the Glory of God*; but that  
it can do only objectively. *Man*  
is the Priest in this great Temple  
of the World, whose Tongue  
must articulate and express what  
they silently offer; he must collect  
the Incense they all afford, and lay  
it upon the Altar. But further,

Need you be put in mind of  
that nursing *Providence*, Provision,  
and Preservation, that has follow'd  
you all your days, with as tender  
and watchful a Care, as if there  
had been but one Person in the  
World to look after; and yet at  
the same time provides for the  
Millions and Millions that compose  
the large Family of Heaven and  
Earth? Feeds *them above* with  
Light and Love, and fills our  
Hearts *below* with Food and Glad-  
ness. Not forgetting to spread a  
Table for the Fowls of the Air,

8 *An EXHORTATION TO*  
 VI. who light on the ground to ga-  
 ther the providential Meat, then  
 rise and sing among the Branches,  
*Psal. CIV. 12.* tho it be but for a  
 Dinner upon half a Worm, a Sip  
 of Water, and a poor Lodging  
 in a Bush; are thankful in their  
 way; as the Poet renders that  
 Verse:

Tate. *Where Shady Trees, from scorching*  
*Beams,*  
*Field Shelter to the feather'd Throng:*  
*They drink, and to the bottom*  
*Scream:*  
*Return the Tribute of their Song.*

We need but mention the Great  
 of Redemption, to awaken every  
 Christian's Glory to the Song of the  
 Lamb. For has he snatcht us from  
 weeping and wailing, and shall we not  
 sing? Shall we not break forth into  
 Singing? When Angels lead the  
 way, shall not we who are nearest  
 Luke II. concern'd repeat, the Glory to God  
 in the highest for this Good-Will to  
 us?  
*Pf. CVII. 2.* *Ment For his Mercy endureth fo-*  
*ever! Let the Redeem'd of the Lor-*  
*say so.*

Shou

*the Duty of SINGING.* 11

Should I go over the Means of Ser. Grace, the Hopes of Glory; the Blessings that spring out of the Earth, and those that come down from Heaven; the Comforts and Directions of his Word; the Refreshment of his Ordinances; the Kingdom a Man enjoys in Peace of Conscience; the Heaven upon Earth foretasted in the Joy of the Holy Ghost; the Triumphs of Soul in the Sense and Evidence of Pardon; the growing Image of God toward Perfection; the Comforts in Death; and Confidence in Judgment: Should I enlarge upon each of these, I should turn my Excitation into a Song; and following the Train of these Motives, should immediately lose my self in Heaven: whose high Hallelujahs must be answer'd from Earth with, *O give thanks unto the Lord! for his Mercy endureth for ever: Let the Redeem'd on the Earth say so, and echo back to the Redeem'd in Heaven: as two Instruments, tho at a distance, if tun'd alike, will answer each other.*

220      *An EXHORTATION to*  
Ser. VI. §. 3. *Consider the Nature and*  
*Excellence of the Duty, as it has*  
Ser. I. & III *been laid before you.*

Singing Psalms is a Compound of several other Dutys ; it contains Prayer to a very great advantage : The Stretch of the Voice does humour and lead on the earnest reaching of the Mind after the desir'd Blessing. 'Tis the very Element and Breath of Praise ; and the *Apostle* tells us, that *Teaching* and *Admonishing* one another is perform'd in singing *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. For when we sing of *Judgment*, 'tis awakening to Sinners ; and when we sing of *Mercy*, it is comforting to all. Meditation can't have a better Help. The solemn Movement of the Time gives room for the Mind to compass the full Sense of the matter, and to impress it deep ; and while the Tongue is making the *Pause*, the Heart may make the *Elevation*. In short, it gives an Accent to all Duty ; 'tis the Musick of all other Ordinances ; 'tis adapted and suited to all Circumstances ; as appears from these  
Psalms

Psalms compos'd upon all Occa-  
 sions and Subjects; Doctrinal, Pro-  
 phetical, Hortatory, and Histo-  
 rical: of Praise and Prayer; of  
 Grief and Joy, in the Penitential  
 and Complaining, in the Trium-  
 phal and Rejoicing: as if singing  
 of Psalms could stand for every  
 thing, and like the *Manna* in the  
*Wilderness*, have a Taste of all the  
 other Food we enjoy in the House  
 of God.

So that tis a Duty that seems  
 design'd to reach many Ends at  
 once; and fitted to move and raise  
 the Mind, to stir and exercise the  
 Graces, to excite our Joy, and to  
 vent our Grief. It is not only  
 calculated for a time of Joy, tho'  
 that's the Climate under which it  
 mostly thrives. There is many a  
 weeping Song indited for a time  
 of Trouble, and some have found  
 this Musick *sweetest* upon the *Wa-*  
*ters*: They have never sang with  
 more Melody in the Heart, than  
 when 'twas with Tears in the  
 Eyes.

It has been already remark'd,  
 that *Luther* and his Company us'd

**Ser. VI.** to sing away their *Fears*, and sing up their *Confidence* in God in the worst of Times; when the prospect of Affairs was threatening and melancholy, and the Company about him dejected by Apprehensions from the Enemies of the Reformation.

Allowance must indeed be made for the Constitutions of some, and the first Shocks of Grief in others, and the different degrees of Grace, and of Strength of Nature: yet it must be acknowledg'd that this Duty has remov'd Grief from some, or in others turn'd it into a better channel; *i. e.* from a worldly Sorrow that worketh Death, into a godly Sorrow that worketh Repentance unto Life. Has taken off the corrosive Fret of worldly Crosses and Disappointments, and turn'd it into a more genuine and healing Grief: which has enabled Christians to drop those Tears in Joy, that were rais'd by Sorrow; and to vent that agreeable Confusion of Passions, which the Chequer-work of Providence does sometimes throw them into. As when  
Sorrow

*the Duty of SINGING.* 21

Sorrow had fill'd the Hearts of the *Ser.*  
*Disciples* at the parting with their   
*Master*, and yet *Peace* and *Good*  
*Cheer* was the Legacy he left them;  
this was the Ordinance they chose  
to close all with. So *Christ*, to  
sute this Frame, went out singing  
towards the *Cross*, as some of our  
*Martyrs* have donetowards a *Stake*:  
So suted is this Duty to all the  
various Sallys of an holy Soul; it  
refines and purifies the Passions  
and Affections it draws forth;  
that while the Joys of the Wicked  
are but Sparks of their own kin-  
dling, or an expiring Blaze, this  
Joy, like the Fire from Heaven  
of old, does both kindle the Sa-  
crifice, and carry it up along  
with it.

This Duty and this Frame must  
needs shorten our way to Heaven,  
and take off the Wearisomness of  
our Journey: 'tis going to Hea-  
ven, as one says, *per Compendium*  
*Itineris*, by the shortest Cut. In-  
deed it's better to go to Heaven  
any how than not at all; but we  
may thank our selves for a heavy  
mournful Passage, when the Righ-  
teous

Ser. V. ~~Virtuous~~ <sup>Persons</sup> describ'd as going thither singing; *They shall sing in the way of the Lord, for great is the Glory of our God.* Not that these Persons escape their particular Crosses; but by the help of this Practice and Frame they do not sourly and morosely drag their Cross along, as if vex'd that there is any such thing as a Cross in Christ's Religion: but they seem cheerfully to run away with it toward Heaven upon this Consideration, because *great is the Glory of God*; because of the *far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.*

S. 4. I shall press the Exhortation, *from the Honour that God has put upon this Ordinance of singing the Divine Praises.*

The Judgment of God is according to Truth; and 'tis at your peril, that you slight, or neglect, or think meanly of a Duty that God has put such an Honour upon: Honours that seem'd design'd to show, among other ends, how much *he* is concern'd for it, *we* in it, and what we may expect from it.

He

He has honour'd it with most *Ser. VI*  
*signal Appearances* of himself; he himself descended, and fill'd the  
*Temple* with a *bright Cloud*, as the  
*Singers* were *praising the Lord*,  
*saying, Praise the Lord, for he is* 2 Chron.  
*good, for his Mercy endureth for e-* V. 13.  
*ver; and then the House was fill'd*  
*with a Cloud, so that the Priests*  
*could not stand to minister by reason*  
*of the Cloud, for the Glory of the*  
*Lord fill'd the House of God.*

God has crown'd it with *eminent*  
*Successes and Blessings*: *Jehosaphat's*  
*Singers* went before the *Army*,  
*praising the Beauty of Holiness,* and 2 Chron.  
*their Enemy's slew one another;* XX. 21.  
*and he ascrib'd his Victory more to*  
*the Divine Song, than to the Mili-*  
*tary Sword.*

God has set the *Broad Seal* of  
*Heaven* to it by *Miracle and Con-*  
*version* at once, confirming there-  
*by its Divine Original, its Efficacy*  
*and Power upon the Heart*:  
*Paul and Silas sung Praise at Mid-* A. XV.  
*night, the Foundations shook, the* 26.  
*Prison-Doors were open'd, every man's*  
*Bands were loos'd, and the Jailor*  
*converted. First Nature trembled,*  
*and*

Ser. VI. and then the *Taylor's Heart*; which shows this way of praising God to be a means of Grace. Here were *Songs in the Night without a Figure, and Musick that moves the Stones themselves without a Fiction.*

§ 5. *It's an Ordinance against which Satan and his Agents have express'd a great deal of Rage; and for which, on the other hand, good People have always had an high Value and Esteem.*

It has been very much the Object of Satan's Spite and Persecution; and therefore our Neglect would fall in with the Design of the Enemy of God's Glory, and our Salvation. I may venture to say, that *this Ordinance* has had its *Martyrs and Confessors* too, as well as the other Parts of our noble Religion. The following Instances will at least show a mighty Value for this Ordinance.

In the Reign of *Julian the Apostate*, when the Oracle of *Daphne* (or they that manag'd it) was disturbed that the Bones of *Babylas* of *Ba-* the Martyr lay so near it; the  
 16. *Christians* were order'd to remove them,

them; and *Theodorus*, a godly Ser.  
young Man, at the Head of the  
Company, brought away his *Coffin*,  
singing as they went that part of  
Psalm *KCVII* where 'tis said,  
*Confounded be all they that worship  
graven Images.* *Julian* inrag'd,  
commanded the Ringleader to be  
apprehended; 'twas done: *Theo-*  
*dorus* is seiz'd, and tortur'd from  
Morning to Night with variety of  
unparallel'd Crueltys; and a Suc-  
cession of fresh Tormentors; and  
tho he was taken up for singing a  
Psalm in contempt of the *Empe-*  
*ror's* Religion, yet while he was  
upon the *Rack*, and the Tormen-  
tors plying him on every side, he  
continu'd with a chearful Counte-  
nance to sing the same over again,  
*Confounded be all they that worship  
graven Images.* The other is that  
of *Publia*, who, as *Julian* pass'd  
by, would sing *Psal. CXV. 4. Their  
Idols are Silver and Gold, the Works  
of Mens Hands; they that make them  
are like unto them:* and when com-  
manded to be silent, especially  
when the *Emperor* pass'd by, she  
sung on *Psal. LXVIII. 1. Let God  
arise*

*Ser. VI. arise, and let his Enemy's be scatter'd.* Enrag'd at this, the *Apostate* commanded her to be brought before him, and beaten till she was all bloody : all which she took as the highest Honour, went back to her House, and continu'd to sing with those about her. Her Behaviour in this I am not here to dispute, I mention it only as an Instance of a zealous Adherence to this part of her Religion, singing of Psalms.

The Value of the Primitive Christians for this Duty was so great, that when they met in the greatest Dangers, and in the Night, this nevertheless made a part of their Worship : And by one that liv'd near the *second Century*, we are told, that 'twas then among the Marks of a *Christian*, that he was one that prais'd God with *Thanksgiving* and singing of *Psalms* ; and that the holy Souls of that time were continually blessing, and praising, presenting Hymns to God, and singing *Psalms*. Praise is the very Breath of the new Creature, and can it ever be wholly stopt in a living

Plin. Ep. ad Traj.  
 Δι' ὡχασίας καὶ ἰαλίου-  
 Δίας. Clem.  
 Alex.  
 Ἀεὶ αἰνέ-  
 σα, ὑμνέ-  
 σα, ὡλο-  
 ζῶσα,  
 ἰαλλισα.  
 t. Strom.  
 h. 6.

### *the Duty of SINGING.*

living Soul? Surely the Righteous  
shall give Thanks unto thy Name. L  
When all the World is call'd upon  
to do so, 'twou'd be strange for  
them to be silent.

*Awake my Glory*; q. d. it's the  
Glory of a good Man, that when  
his Mind is tun'd, his Soul can go  
up with his Song, and is able to  
mount above the Attraction of  
worldly Pleasures, and the Impres-  
sion of worldly Occurrences, glo-  
rying in the Lord: *My Glory* I do  
not place in my Nomination to  
the Kingdom, nor in my military  
Skill, nor in my Relation to King  
Saul; but that I have a *fix'd Heart*  
and a *ready Tongue* to sing and give  
Praise.

Other Christians have chosen  
rather to endure all Torments  
than quit the Practice, and give up  
the Ordinance.

And at the time of the *Refor-*  
*mation* you might, both in *England* <sup>R</sup>  
and *France*, distinguish *Papists* and <sup>VC</sup>  
*Protestants* by their enmity against <sup>94</sup>  
this Duty, or Value for it. When  
*England* began to shake off *Rome*,  
we are told, by a learned Writer,  
“ That

Ser. VI. " That Mens Affections to the  
 ~~~~~ " Work of Reformation were  
 " every where measur'd by their
 " singing or not singing of the
 " translated Psalms. And as to
France, when *Clement Marot*, a
Courtier and a *Poet*, had consecra-
 ted his *Muse* to God, and tran-
 slated about fifty of *David's*
 Psalms into French Metre; *Beza*
 did an hundred more, and all the
 Scripture-Songs: *Lewis Guadimet*,
 the *Asaph* or *Jeduthun* of that Age,
 skilfully set them to those melo-
 dious Tunes that are sung to this
 day. This holy Ordinance so
 charm'd the Ears and Affections of
 all, that it gave a mighty Spread
 to the Reformation, and contri-
 buted greatly to the Propagation
 of the Gospel. Persons of all
 Ranks sung Psalms, not only in
 the Temples, but in their Familys;
 and no Gentleman of the Re-
 form'd Religion would sit down
 at his Table without praising God,
 by singing a Psalm: and they
 made it a special Part of their
 Morning and Evening-Worship.
 The Rage of the Popish Clergy a-
 gainst

Synod. in
 Gallia Re-
 form. vol.
 1. P. 5.

gainst this was no wonder, but Ser. VI. the manner of managing their Opposition was remarkable, and the Alarm that it gave them.

'Twas represented to the *King*, Beze Hist. Eccl. de France, Part I. p. 141, 142. that the *Church was falling*, and that the *Magistrate* was going to be depos'd, and that the *Lutherans* were raising Sedition, because they sung Psalms; tho the Psalms for the *King's Majesty*, and the Prosperity of the Kingdom were always sung first: Whereupon the singing of Psalms was prohibited all the Kingdom over.

But their usual Methods of Force and Violence were not the only Opposition they made to this Ordinance: Profane Songs were encourag'd, *Catullus* and *Tibullus* were brought into the Field against *David* and *Asaph*; and the Ribaldry of those *obscene Poets*, whom the Cardinal of *Lovain* had procur'd to be translated; and sung in the Court, was oppos'd to the teaching and admonishing one another in *Psalms, Hymns, and spiritual Songs*: as if they were conscious who were the best Allies to their Cause, those

 Ser. VI. those inspir'd from Heaven, or those from Hell; and that the *Romish Church* had less to fear from the Profaness of those wanton *Poets*, than from the singing *David's Psalms with Grace in the Heart*.

It's certain, that if this Ordinance had had fair play, *Popery* would have been driven out by it, as surely as the *evil Spirit* in *Saul* fled before *David's Harp*, or the *Ammonites* before *Jehosaphat's Singers*. No wonder then 'twas one of the first things struck at, both when the *Reformation* was first begun, and the Extirpation of our Religion more lately desigh'd, and carry'd on in *France* by the *Great Persecutor* of this Day, in comparison of whom the *Nero's* and *Dia- clesian's* of old were harmless and modest Names.

Les Plain-
tes des
Protest.
cruellem.
opprimes
en Franc.
M. Claud.

Singing *Psalms* was always an insupportable Part of our Worship to the *Popish Clergy*. They omitted no Endeavours to deprive the *Protestants* of this Consolation by several *Edicts*. Some forbidding Singing in private *Houses*; some commanding them to cease Sing-
ing,

the Duty of SINGING. 213

ing, even in their *Churches*, when Ser: VI. the Sacrament past by, or at the time of any Procession. But at length, when the Project of destroying the Reform'd was ripe for execution, they got it universally prohibited by an *Arrest of Council* in the year 1661. Then it was criminal to sing Psalms either in publick or private, upon penalty of 500 *Livres*; their Psalm-Books were burnt publicly by the common Hangman, and several were beaten and sent to Prison for praising God that way: as if *David's Psalms* were a very naughty Book, and not so fit to be trusted with the common People as *Catullus* and *Tibullus*. Hist. Apol. des Eglises Ref. de Franc. cap. 18.

Hereupon criminal Processes were form'd against several, who made no more difficulty of violating this Order, than *Daniel* did with respect to that Decree which forbade him to pray to his God.

A *Protestant Minister* publish'd a little Book in the Defence of singing Psalms, and to show the injustice and Impiety of these Prohibitions, and the Obligations that

all

Ser. VI. all Christians are under to sing
 ~~~~~ the Praises of God: 'Twas or-  
 der'd, by another *Arrest of Coun-  
 cil*, Ann. 1663. that his *Book* should  
 be burnt, the Author banisht for  
 a Year, and render'd incapable of  
 exercising his Ministry during that  
 time; and that the *Bookseller*, who  
 Hist. Apol. ch. 18. printed it, should not only be ba-  
 nish'd for two Years, but should  
 pay 300 *Livres*; and neither he,  
 nor any of his *Family*, should ever  
 keep *Shop* any more: which was  
 executed accordingly. But not-  
 withstanding these Declarations,  
 and the Severity with which they  
 were executed, so vast a number  
 continu'd to sing Psalms both in  
 their Houses and elsewhere, that  
 those *Judges* who had any Remains  
 of Honour or Conscience, were  
 asham'd to execute always the  
 Severity of these *Edicts*: Yet they  
 continu'd in full force, and as the  
*Persecution* increas'd, they redou-  
 bled the rigorous Execution of  
 these Prohibitions against singing  
 of Psalms.

Among others, 'twas a noble  
 Testimony born to this Ordinance  
 by

*the Duty of SINGING:* 215

by an *Artisan*, of the Town of Ser. VI  
*Castres* in the *Upper Languedoc*;  
When an *Officer* shew'd him the  
Declaration against singing *Psalms*,  
he confounded the *Adversary*, by  
subscribing at the bottom no other  
Answer than this, with his own  
Hand: *Psal. XXXIV. 1. I will bless*  
*the Lord at all times, his Praise*  
*shall be continually in my Mouth.*

*In their Version:*

*Jamais ne Cesserai,*  
*De Magnifier, le Seigneur,*  
*En ma Bouche aurai son Honeur:*  
*Tant que vivant serai.*

*Tate and Brady:*

*Thro all the changing Scenes of*  
*Life,*  
*In Trouble, or in Joy,*  
*The Praises of my God shall still*  
*My Heart and Tongue employ.*

This was indeed with *David* to  
say, *While I live I will praise the*  
*Lord; I will sing Praises to my God*  
*while I have my Being.* As if *Da-*  
*vid* liv'd by the *Breath of Praise*,  
and desir'd to live no longer than  
he could do so. I

Ser. VI. I may be allow'd to mention, as  
 a further Instance of a mighty  
 value for this Ordinance, the *Peo-*  
*ple of Orange*; who when the me-  
 lancholy News was brought them  
 that they were abandon'd to the  
*French Cruelty* without Relief, and  
 that they must leave their Habi-  
 tations and Country, they were  
 resolv'd to *part with a Psalm*:  
 and judging it to be the last Li-  
 berty they should have of assem-  
 bling in the *Church*, thither they  
 all repair in Crowds, and melting  
 into Tears: The *Minister*, who  
 preach'd that day, caus'd the  
 List Psalm to be sung kneeling;  
 Sing they would, tho they were  
 interrupted with a great many  
 Sighs, and Sobs and Tears.

Shall they sing thus in the Fur-  
 nace of Affliction, and glorify  
 God in the midst of the Fires?  
 Shall they not only offer the Sacri-  
 fice of Praise, but make themselves  
 a Sacrifice rather than omit it?  
 And will not their Singing up-  
 braid our Silence and Neglect?  
 Blessed be God we are not call'd  
 to be *Martyrs* for the Ordinance,  
 nor

## *the Duty of SINGING.* 4

nor to *sing the Songs of the Lord in Ser a strange Land*, and in the want of all things : Nay in the want of all things (says a great Soul) should we praise the Lord; tho he has taken away every thing else, if he hath not taken away Himself, who is greater and better than All. But where God has given all things pertaining to Life and Godliness, and fill'd the Mouth with good things, 'tis that the Lips should show forth his Praise, for our Personal, Family and Publick Mercys, in secret, in private, and in publick.

(1.) *Sometimes secretly, and alone by our selves.* David had his Songs in the *Night*, when alone; and several of his Psalms seem compos'd for his own *private Use*: And the *Apostle* says, *If any Man*, any particular Man by himself, *be merry, let him sing Psalms.* The Voice of Praise will sweeten Retirement, perfume the Closet, and bring down the best of Company to us, or carry up our Souls to that which is so: This has been found, by many a poor Sufferer,

Ser. VI. a strong Consolation in their dark  
 and solitary Dungeons and Prisons.

(2.) *In your Familys, supposing a competent Number, and capable Voices.* This moreover supposes Family-Worship (*i. e.*) that you are Christians, according to the Judgment of a great Person, whose words are these: “Constant Family-Worship is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God and Religion in the Minds of Men, that I see not how any Family, that neglects it, can in reason be esteem’d a Family of Christians, or indeed to have any Religion at all. And singing Psalms makes a refreshing enlivening part of that Worship, where it can be decently perform’d. That this was the Practice of the *Primitive Christians*, appears from several Testimonys produc’d by the learned Author of the *Enquiry into the Constitution and Discipline of the Primitive Church*: They sung Psalms at their Meals, and at their Festivals. *Tertullian* inveighing against Marriage with

ABp Til-  
lotson’s  
Sermon of  
Family-  
Religion.

Part II.  
c. 1.  
Ciem.  
Alex.

\*

with Unbelievers, from the pre-Ser. V  
 judice such an unequal Yoke would  
 be to Family-Religion, takes par-  
 ticular notice of this Branch of it,  
 of singing \* Psalms: *What Far and*  
*Discord must Vanity and Profaneness*  
*be to this heavenly Musick of a Soul*  
*divinely tun'd?* And afterwards  
 describing the Happy † Pair whom  
 Love and Religion have united,  
 he mentions this Part among the  
 other Harmonys of such a Condi-  
 tion, *That they sing together* (sup-  
 posing Ability) *as Heirs of the 7.*  
*Grace of Life; neither their Prayers,*  
*nor their Psalms were hinder'd.*  
 This was formerly more the Prac-  
 tice of good People, than 'tis now;  
 and in later times, when Family-  
 Religion was not so unfashionable  
 a thing.

One of the *Ministers*, in a *Fare-  
 wel-Sermon*, tells his Hearers,  
 " That he cou'd remember the  
 " time when a Person, on a Lord's  
 " Day, might hear a continu'd

---

\* Quid Maritus suus illi, vel marito quid  
 illa cantabit? † Sonant inter duos Psalmi,  
 & Hymni, &c.

Ser. VI. " Melody of Psalms, in walking  
 ~~~~~ " from one end of this City to  
 " the other. It's certain there
 are Family-Mercys and Blessings
 that call for Family-Praises, as
 well as publick and personal. *Da-*
vid seems to mark the good Man's
 Door with this Inscription, *The*
Voice of Rejoycing and of Salvation
is in the Tabernacles of the Righteous;
 Ps. XXX. and he compos'd a Psalm on pur-
 pose for the dedicating of his
 Deut. XX. own House. Under the Law eve-
 ry House was dedicated : Dedic-
 5. ation and Worship make a Church,
 and by this 'twill be known that
 there is a Church in thy House.

Mr. Philip And as a *Man of God* us'd to say,
 Henry's " This is the way to hold forth
 Life. " Godliness, like *Rahab's* scarlet
 " Thread, to such as pass by our
 " Windows. And as the same
 excellent Man us'd to say, " They
 " do well who pray Morning and
 " Evening in their Familys, but
 " they do better who pray and
 " read the Scriptures; but they
 " do best of all, who pray, and
 " read, and sing Psalms: and
 " Christians should covet earnest-

“ ly the best Gifts. This was his Ser.
own daily Practice, which he ma-
nag’d so as to make it a Pleasure,
and not a Task to Children and
Servants; seldom long, never te-
dious: for he had an excellent Fa-
culty of rendring Religion the
most sweet and amiable Employ-
ment in the World.

It’s a Trifle to object we are
afraid of being overheard, and
that we shall only entertain the
Banter of a scoffing World. In-
deed a prudent Man will order his
Affairs with Discretion, and Wis-
dom is profitable to direct; but
examine, whether this is not be-
ing asham’d of God and his Way.
May not your Example and Prac-
tice do good to others? Has not
your own Heart been warm’d
and affected when you have gone
by and heard a Family so im-
ploy’d? I shall only add, That if
Paul and *Silas* had been afraid of
being overheard, the Jailor might
never have been converted.

(3.) *Awake your Glory, and sing
to God in Publick, with the united
Voices of the Congregation. Let us*

222 *An EXHORTATION to*

*Ser. VI. come before his Presence with Thanks-
giving, and make a joyful Noise
Ps. XCV. 2. unto him with Psalm's; and praise him
in the midst of the great Congrega-
tion.*

*Be this the Burden of your Song,
In full Assembly bless the Lord;
All who to Israel's Tribe belong,
The God of Israel's Praise record.
Psal. Tate.*

I close all with an Address to
two sorts of Persons.

First, You that are yet *unsatisfy'd* and *unconvinc'd*, have a care
of a censorious *judging* Spirit, or
reproachful Language: don't give
way to any *Elstrangedness* from
your Brethren upon this account.
Your differing Opinion in this
Matter ought not to drive you
from the Communion of those that
practise Singing; because you are
not forc'd to sing with them, but
may be meditating all the while;
and because of the indispensable
Duty all Christians are under to
allow each other the Liberty of
Conscience. If a Congregation
should

the Duty of SINGING. 1

should be equally divided for, and Ser.
against this; I can see no Reason
why the one should say to the o-
thers, you shall not sing, while the
Singers do not force it upon the
Refusers; but according to Rule,
*Leave them that are otherwise mind-
ed, till God shall reveal it;* and yet
*whereto we have attain'd walking to-
gether.* I am not utterly a Stran-
ger to the Twistings and Turnings
us'd to evade this; but be open
to Conviction: Strain not for
Difficultys: Do not make an hard
shift to remain unsatisfy'd, while
some may without Censure be sup-
pos'd to practise many things in
Religion upon less Evidence and
weaker Proof. Omit not the Me-
thods of Information, Reading,
Prayer and Converse; and when
your Objections are fairly an-
swer'd, let not Prejudice or Cus-
tom step up to the Breach, and
maintain the Ground against a
friendly Attack; in yielding to
which you'll afterwards see Reason
to sing a Triumph over your own
Defeat.

Your

Ser. VI. You that are *satisfy'd*, let not
 your Souls be *untun'd* by any
 flights that may be put upon it by
 the Profane on the one hand, or
 the Mistaken on the other. It
 sounds odd to you, the making it
 a Question, whether we should
 sing God's Praises or no? but let
 it not surprize you that this Or-
 dinance has its Enemys. Exercise
 a Candour and Love towards those
 you count mistaken; and tho you
 cannot, must not carry it so far
 as to sacrifice a plain Duty to their
 Prejudice, neither let your Zeal
 for one Duty eat up the other of
 Charity and Forbearance. Be true
 to your own Principles, and allow
 a Latitude to others.

Let your gracious Frame, and
 serious manner of performing it,
 and your spiritual Improvement
 by it, do an Honour to the Ordi-
 nance, and recommend it to o-
 thers.

Always admire the Grace and
 Goodness of God in a Mediator,
 that does not disdain to accept of
 such Praises as ours. Admire that
 any

any thing we can do should be Ser.
 call'd *Service*, and that any thing
 we can say should be call'd *Praise*.
 When the *Sons of the Morning* still
 sing together, and continually sur-
 round his Throne with unspotted
 Hallelujahs; yet he says to a
 Worm, *Let me hear thy Voice, for Cant.*
'tis pleasant. Certainly this is to
 the end that my Glory should not
 be silent, but should sing and give
 Praise. With David's Resolve;

P S A L M.

IN praising God, while he pro-
 longs
 My Breath, I will that Breath
 imploy:
 And join Devotion to my Songs,
 Sincere as is in him my Joy.

While

Ser. VI.



While Sinners from Earth's Face
are bur'd,

My Soul, praise thou his Holy
Name:

Till, with thy Song, the listening
World

Join Consort, and his Praise pro-
claim.

Tate.

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